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Translating Poetics: Analysing the Connections Between Violeta Parra's Music, Poetry and Art

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form to this or any other University for a degree.

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Signature

Summary

The aim of this thesis is to study the links and relations between the musical, poetic and visual art of the Chilean artist Violeta Parra (1917-1967). While scholarly attention has focused mainly on its poetical output, there has been little research of her interdisciplinary profile, in which context her most important achievement was paradoxically recognized abroad, through her visual work when exhibited interdisciplinarily at the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Palais du Louvre. While in Chile her oeuvre struggled for acceptance, in Paris, Parra was praised as a total artist who displayed her poetic language through many art forms.

A rigorous analysis of this interdisciplinary profile reveals a significant gap in the current literature which I seek to redress to shed light on a comparative hypothesis regarding interlinked poetics. My analytical standpoint is based upon Parra's interdisciplinary career, activity and thought which is notable for collecting, researching, creating and promoting Chilean traditional customs as well as her own artwork.

While rooted in music studies, this five-chapter thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach drawing from literary studies – specifically from linguistics and literary theory – and art studies. My position on Parra's oeuvre is not to consider each art form separately but consider them as an overall representation, attempting to suggest ways that these different arts can inform each other and converge in new perspectives and knowledge. Thus, taking a historical viewpoint and looking at the main influences, this project tries to outline the main features of Parra's poetical translation from one media to another. The final goal of this thesis is to provide and set another significant dimension of this renowned folk singer-songwriter: Violeta Parra as an interdisciplinary artist.

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Glossary

Arpillera: an embroidered burlap; coarse canvas woven from jute over which wool is embroidered to form figures.

Chinganas: the term formerly used in Chile to name a hiding place, a place of ill repute to drink, eat and have fun; during the nineteenth century, these were the places of entertainment similar to a tavern. From these places spread rural and popular practices such as the cueca.

Décima [tenth]: a strophe of ten octosyllabic verses, the first rhyming with the fourth and fifth, the second with the third, the sixth with the seventh and tenth and the eighth with the ninth [abbaaccddc].

Emparva: to spread the cereal over the threshing floor.

Entonaciones: are the melodies used to sing the Canto a lo Poeta repertoire. There are standard melodies in each area and region of Chile.

Guitarron: a 25-steel-stringed guitar-shaped plucked instrument originated and developed in Chile, used as the instrumental accompaniment for the traditional genre of sung poetry known as el Canto del Poeta [Appendix 1]. Parra's poetic description can be found in the second stanza of her first *décima* (Parra, 1998, p. 23).

Gloriado: drink prepared with hot water, brandy and sugar.

Greda: clay.

Kultrun: a membranophone; a percussion instrument used by the Mapuche people, it is the most sacred and important instrument of their culture. Literally, the universe and the synthesis of the world are depicted on its surface made of hollowed wood and covered with goat leather.

Canto a lo Poeta: the musical repertoire for sung poetry, it primarily uses the literary meter of quatrains and/or tenths to sing melodies called 'entonaciones' accompanied by the 'guitarrón' and/or the rabel – a local form of violin, and its themes are divided into two main groups: "canto a lo divino" and "canto a lo humano". It dates back to the time of the Conquest (sixteenth century).

Canto a lo divino: featuring sacred verses.

Canto a lo humano: featuring secular verses.

Mansera: a container placed under a mill to receive the liquid of crushed products.

Palla/paya/Payadores: a poetical genre whose main feature is the improvised free verse in an improvisation duel between two poets which may be sung or declaimed. Someone who improvises in verse is called Payador.

Parabienes: a song of homage to the couple in the celebration of marriage, requesting the blessing of God for the happy maintenance of their marital status. However, there are also satirical variants, against marriage, whose mischievous texts contain warnings about the unpleasant surprises that the happy couple will have to experience. Its literary meter is generally octosyllabic, and gathered in quatrains or tenths.

Punteo/Punteadas: usually used in reference to a song's melody being played on guitar, as opposed to a strummed guitar accompaniment.

Ramada/fonda: "A temporary shelter made from branches and leaves where people gather to eat, drink, and dance. Ramadas are usually set up in parks or other public spaces in conjunction with the commemoration of Chile's Independence Day, September 18th." (Verba, 2013, p.269)

Sopaipilla: a fried pastry made from the mix of wheat flour and pumpkin very popular in South America.

Roto/rotito: a pejorative term used to refer to uneducated poor people who lack the established social graces. Today, this term is also used to depict the image or identity of a type of traditional Chilean individual.

Zanco: stew of wheat or corn toast flour mixed with water, fat and salt.

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¹ All the images are included in a separate volume which is under embargo due to copyright issues.

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Introduction

Poetry
 painting
 farming
 you do everything wondrously
 without the least effort
 like someone drinking a glass of wine

Nicanor Parra
 'In defence of Violeta Parra'

As a musician, I am deeply interested not only in the music composed by Violeta Parra but in the way her poetry and visual art seem to be 'speaking' in a similar way. I knew that there were multidisciplinary artists who have created in more than one artform, but at the same time I also knew that this has not been a common characteristic of Western art culture. Parra had created at the same time poetry, music and visual art. Yet, what shocked me the most before researching Parra was the fact there were a number of enigmatic and interesting facts covering her oeuvre such as being an untrained folk musician who became the first Latin American in exhibiting visual arts at the Louvre. This is quite an unusual profile in comparison to the most renowned Chilean artists worldwide. Step by step I felt fascinated by what I was going to learn from Parra.

For example, since I started my guitar lessons, I became aware of something that really interested me after hearing Sergio Sauvalle's² album *La Cueca Bien Temperada* (Matthey, 2000) [the well-tempered Cueca] - and later at the conservatory with Luis Orlandini's³ *Bicentenario de la Guitarra Chilena, Vol.1* - that there was a classical repertoire of music mainly from Europe which I had to learn from and, on the other hand, a musical repertoire from Chile which I barely heard during my ten years in conservatory. Amidst miscellaneous composers, Sauvalle's album included two works for solo guitar by Violeta Parra, which really shocked me because I had only known her as ordinary

² Sergio Sauvalle (Chile, 1951) is a guitarist, researcher and composer whose work has been focused on the traditional music of Chile. His father was a member of the famous folk group Los Huasos Quincheros. He graduated from the University of Chile with a degree in Fine Art and holds a Master of Arts in Musicology.

³ Luis Orlandini (Chile, 1964) has premiered and recorded most of the art music for solo guitar by Chilean composers.

people did: as a folk singer-songwriter. I am unsure whether this was before going to the first display of Parra's visual work at the Palacio de la Moneda museum in Chile, but either way I had never perceived Parra as an artist who created in different media. Later, before finishing my Bachelor's degree, my interest in Chilean music grew because after playing Dowland, Bach, Sor, etc, abroad, people would ask me to play some Chilean folk music.

In the classical guitar repertoire from Latin America, the likes of Heitor Villa-lobos' *Choros nº1*, Agustín Barrios' *La Catedral*, and Leo Brower's *Elogio de la Danza*, are broadly known, but, what could I play as 'Chilean-root' music for solo guitar? For some reason, I never thought of Parra's music for solo guitar as 'folk music' or traditional, but as a sort of experimental music with folk elements, a practice commonly found in art music. There was a severely limited availability of this music,⁴ whether original or transcribed for solo guitar, and I found myself playing the same 'Chilean pieces' over and over, so I decided to try creating something informally myself, following Sauvalle's approach to composing Chilean music. In 2010 and 2011, I had the honour of being awarded twice for composition of Chilean music for solo guitar at the Festival Guitarras de America.⁵ But there was nowhere to formally study it, and the musicians who composed this type of music were few.

I really wanted to study Chilean folk music because my compositional knowledge also was limited despite my conservatory studies, but I could not find out how. My only option was to study Chilean folk music by myself, as I had from the beginning. In 2011, I went to the University of Barcelona to study for a Master's degree in interdisciplinary music, but although I wanted to focus on music for guitar I ended up researching the interdisciplinarity of Violeta Parra as we were studying Kandinsky's interdisciplinarity in the Master's curriculum. On my first written assignment the best example that came to my mind was Parra because I knew she had created 'some' visual arts and 'some' poetry. Subsequently, I started to discover that her oeuvre had spawned a good deal of secondary texts, mainly biographies that reconstructed her career from relatives' and friends' accounts. I became aware that there was a bibliography with which to approach Parra's interdisciplinarity in the same way as my existing studies of music as an interdisciplinary art, therefore I decided to examine the extent to which Parra's oeuvre

⁴ Naxos, a leading classical music label, released the album *Guitar Music of Chile* in 2008, on which Jose A. Escobar plays a selection of this music, including Parra's five anticuecas.

⁵ *Tres Aires Nortinos* (2010) and *Tres Pies de Cueca* (2011). Available at URL: <https://sussex.academia.edu/AlejandroEscobarMundaca/Musical-Composition>

may be interrelated by bringing together some analysis of Parra's poetry, music and visual art.

After finishing my master's thesis, I started to think of Parra as an interdisciplinary artist because I noticed that she shares many features in common with those artists who created in different media and translated artistic values from one art to another, as I shall review in Chapter I. I thought, what better way of studying Chilean folklore than by researching Parra's oeuvre for learning how to create 'Chilean-root' music? I found that I must do the same as Parra did; research Chilean folk culture in order to be able to compose 'Chilean-root' music. At the same time, I noticed that there was a fertile field of research in this regard. Also, a good deal of the Parra bibliography had been written abroad which made me consider the feasibility of continuing my research outside Chile.

As soon as I started this thesis, I found that there were a number of texts focused on Parra's political songs that explained in some detail their poetical and musical elements, background, context and themes (Alcalde, 1975; Aravena, 2001, 2004; Cánepa, 1983; 1987a, 1987b; Elliott, 2008; Epple, 1979; Fairley, 1984, 1985; González, 2006; Manns, 1977; Martínez-Reverte, 1976; Morris, 1986; Osorio, 2005; Spencer, 2000; Torres, 2004) . Still, overall, this scholarly research has predominantly been restricted to the links between Parra's verbal output and her biography by highlighting her significance as a social voice of the working class and indigenous people as well as to the folkloric aspects of her work and to her success as a musician. Some texts explain the manifold angles that she embodied as an icon of the working class in the Chilean society, and industrialization, and her struggle against the institutionalized Chilean bourgeoisie; unveiling the very nature of the tension between the popular and the cultivated cultures (Adams, 2013; Arguedas et al, 1968; Epple, 1977, 1994; Fairley and Horn, 2002; Montealegre, 2011; Osorio, 2005; Pinochet 2007, 2010; Uribe, 2002; Venegas, 2014; Vilches 2004, 2008). Overall, this scholarship has privileged a textual analysis of Parra's songs over the musical features, which means that we know much more about what she expressed verbally than how she used non-verbal modes of expression in painting and instrumental music. From a guitar-player's perspective, this is interesting but also problematic because I want to know what I am playing, as I do when I play Villa-Lobos. A few studies – mainly articles – have addressed Parra's musical features, which have generated disparate responses, as we shall see in Chapter IV and Chapter V. However, a significant contribution has been made by Lucy Oporto (2013), that I shall use throughout this thesis and is currently the first and only book to study Parra's musical features. Her discography, on the other hand, is less successful (I. Parra, 2011, p. 230). Parra's phonographic recordings currently have an official - but incomplete

- discography published by Chilevisión Música in 2014, which I shall use here, containing two DVDs of videos and thirteen CDs re-edited and mixed from the vinyl originals, but do not include, among others, the very famous album *Las Últimas Composiciones de Violeta Parra* (Parra, 1966) which contains world-famous songs such as 'Gracias a la Vida' and 'Volver a los 17'.

Conversely, there was a significant amount of scholarly attention given to Parra's poetry that analysed her autobiography *Décimas*, (Canales, 2005; López, 2010; Miranda, 2000, 2001; Rodríguez, 1994; Vilches, 2008), and also reading some of Parra's songs as poetical works explaining the strong peasant tradition in her literary material which comes from medieval Hispanic literature. Overall, many agree that Parra's poetical language is based on the sung *décima* style, known in Chile as *Canto a lo Poeta* and whose practice is derived from the European troubadour tradition (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1988; Boyle, 2009; Dölz-Blackbörn, 1989, 1990; Farías, 1990; Lindstrom, 1985; Malizia, 2008; Millares, 2000; Morales, 2003; Mulnich, 1997; Nieves, 2011; Pring-Mill, 1990). Contrary to the musical studies, this literary scholarship has identified and set Parra in a historical lineage of popular poetry, but at the same time also evaluated Parra's poetical innovation in using and mixing traditional metre and verse construction, that have led some to suggest it may be considered as a type of modernist poetry, as we shall see in Chapter III.

The lack of scholarly material on her visual art represents the most significant gap on Parra's oeuvre. This is due to the fact that the majority of her artworks were not revealed publicly until the creation of the Fundación Violeta Parra (Parra, 2015) in 1992 founded by Isabel and Angel - Parra's children - in order to collect and preserve Parra's art (Parra, 2011, p. 229), because of the fact that most of them were hidden⁶ - and moved out in secret - from Pinochet's dictatorship to be saved in different countries of America and Europe (Montealegre, 2011, pp. 76-79). All the images of Parra's visual works, photographs and videos I shall use here come from the official publications of this foundation which in 2014 created the Fundación Museo Violeta Parra (Parra, 2017) to permanently house Parra's visual art and other objects in a museum.⁷ The first attempt to discuss some of Parra's visual works was the book *Violeta Parra o la expresión*

⁶ Nicanor Parra (Quezada, 2014, p. 36) declared his concern that most of Violeta's arpilleras, paintings, and other artworks could not be brought to Chile after being exhibited at the Louvre, making clear that this should be done by the Chilean Faculty of Fine Arts and the government. It was thanks to the revolutionary government of Cuba that they were finally moved to Chile.

⁷ Unfortunately, the images have been redacted from the main body of the thesis due to third party copyright issues and including it separately in a separate volume which will be subject to an embargo.

inefable (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1992) in which the authors provide a poetical study of songs and a chapter addressing some visual works, pointing out the disparity in reception that Parra's visual art received from the Chilean artistic community. Agosín had previously researched Chilean arpilleras (Agosín, 1985, 1987) claiming that Parra's arpilleras are the basis of these activities in Chile. It was after twenty years that the academic interest arose; two bachelor theses present a proposal for a museum for Parra's works (Aranda, 2004; Contreras, 2004). After these, a couple of books have briefly discussed the visual features of Parra's art (Morales, 2003; Montealegre, 2011), with a transversal scope discussing the possible connections between Parra's music, poetry and visual art. *Violeta Parra obra visual* (Parra, 2008) became the first visual analysis; as explored by Chilean scholars Isabel Cruz de Amenabar and Jose Ricardo Morales. Finally, *Violeta Parra's Visual Art* (Dillon, 2013) became the first academic analysis on Parra's visual production which examines "the political dialectic of Parra's work, placing it within national and global contexts: neo-indigenism, politically engaged art and the global counter-culture of the 1960s", and appraising "Parra as an artist of calibre, who made a strong contribution to modern art in the 1960s" (Dillon, 2013, p. 3).

Overall, this thesis focuses on one particular truth; that Parra created much of her interdisciplinary work simultaneously between 1958 and 1965, that is to say, she penned songs, wrote her autobiography, painted and sewed at the same time. As she stated in an interview "In my arpilleras I try to show Chilean songs, legends, folk life itself" (Parra, 2014k, track 3). In this regard, Parra's oeuvre lacks academic studies which analyse her interdisciplinary profile as we shall see in Chapter I suggesting the need for research that explains and connects her creations in music, poetry and visual art not as separate but as interrelated works. Therefore, this thesis will attempt to present Parra in a historical high-art tradition through references to related examples of art from antiquity through to modernism, and assuming the challenge of presenting Parra from a classically informed perspective in order to situate her within two significant traditions: interdisciplinary art history and activist art history.

In Chapter I, I begin by addressing a key question: were Parra's activities and art similar to other types of interdisciplinary artists or art movements? If we identify what she did, we can therefore place and compare her art to earlier precedents in the Western art tradition. Accordingly, I briefly review the historical context regarding how music has been linked to other art forms since ancient times, to examine the kind of interdisciplinary works, theories and authors that can be used to analyse and explore Parra's interdisciplinary oeuvre. The next key question, therefore, should address how we approach these kinds of relationships. Specifically, how do we research Parra's

interdisciplinary painting *Casamiento de negros* [Figure 1]? I then suggest the idea of translation, from one artistic medium to another, as the means through which Parra expressed and represented similar themes in her oeuvre, briefly reviewing how the notion of intermedia translation has been artistically used historically, such as from painting to poetry, which is traditionally known as ekphrasis. Finally, I focus on the two chief concepts that shall allow us to understand the starting point for this thesis, outlining and describing the interdisciplinary notion of poetics, and the way the act of translation allows the transference of poetics between different art forms. I do not intend a thorough review of the history of the interrelationships between arts nor to establish a theory about translation in art. Rather I shall select some examples from the history of art and literature that best help to link Parra's artwork because it is already difficult and challenging to 'translate' Parra's world and her use of traditional modes of expression from Spanish to English. Still, by way of conclusion, I try to set a theoretical framework for Parra's interdisciplinary artwork, and theorise and thematise 'translation'; from one language to another; from 'reality' to 'representation', and to delineate my use of these key concepts for this thesis.

In Chapter II, I focus on describing Parra's interdisciplinary art, how she defined it, and look at the very foundation of Parra's interdisciplinary activity. Thus, this chapter also contains biographical information about Parra, from her early career to her death by suicide in 1967. We may ask, what type of elements did Parra use for her multiple artistic activities? As we shall see, Parra's oeuvre emerged during key moments in twentieth century art, specifically, at a time when Pablo Neruda (1904-1973) was considered the most important Chilean artist around the world. On the other hand, Parra's oeuvre was also created in Paris, whose intense artistic life was illuminated by Pablo Picasso and successive influential artistic movements. Accordingly, this chapter will focus on Parra's visual poetics and the ways in which they were poetically translated. We shall see how Parra's visual art has been perceived and labelled in quite a different manner to most of her songs, which has perpetuated a problematic and contradictory narrative to this day: that of naïve art.

Chapter III looks at the literary foundations of Parra's poetics, focusing on the most significant figure in Parra's life: her older brother Nicanor Parra. In doing so, I analyse the interrelationship between Nicanor's antipoetry and Violeta's anticuecas, revealing how the prefix 'anti' outlines and thematises Violeta's poetics, which ultimately were poetically translated into her own autobiography and her own type of popular poetry, which she titled 'centésimas'. However, the aim of this chapter is to provide a comparative hypothesis on the extent of influence of each sibling, specifically how their

poetics seem to echo and anticipate each other. But more importantly, to expose the critical and provocative nature of Nicanor's language as this may help us to understand and question Violeta's unorthodox art.

Chapter IV continues the inquest into the influence of Nicanor's antipoetry, this time from a musical perspective, detailing the elements used by Violeta to musically translate her own poetics. We shall see that Violeta used traditional practices as the foundation for her musical poetics but went much further beyond that by experimenting with art music models such as ballet, music for solo guitar, and working with new media of the time in Chile such as television and film. Most of the short musical scores used as examples in this chapter - and in the fifth - were written by myself, either because I made subtle changes from a critical perspective, such as in the case of the anticuecas, or because there are no published transcriptions, such as for the music for films. However, there are two which I have reproduced from their original transcriptions since I am in full agreement with their accuracy.

In Chapter V, I address Parra's politics, an aspect of her art that was deeply ingrained in her life and work, and her best-known attribute. I review and discuss the scholarship on this topic and how Parra ideologically problematized it through different media. I shall focus on Parra's voice, an area overlooked by Parra scholars, by analysing the deep critical signification she placed on it. In order to contextualize Parra's critical nature, and drawing on the topos of the world turned upside down, I review and describe the way this artistic device has been used since antiquity as a tool of critique, the way it developed in rural areas of Chile as a sung poetry, and how Parra herself learned and used it. I finally propose an analysis that unveils how Parra poetically translated the ideology of a Neruda text into a song by turning the world upside down; from words to musical notes. As mentioned before, I include my own short score transcriptions as examples because I do not fully agree with the veracity of the existing transcriptions or because, in the case of 'El Pueblo', there is no published transcription of the song.

Chapter I

First I request permission to translate the guitar: approaches to translation in art

The language of the poet is his language, he is utterly immersed in it, inseparable from it, he makes use of each form, each word, each expression according to its unmediated power to assign meaning. [...] Everything that the poet sees, understands and thinks, he does through the eyes of a given language.

Mikhail Bakhtin

Discourse in Poetry and Discourse in the Novel

The Interrelationship Between Music, Poetry, and Visual Art.

'Décima III'

Primero, pido licencia
pa' trasportar la guitarra;
después, digo que fue Parra
quien me donó l'existencia.
Si me falta l'elocuencia
para tejer el relato,
me pongo a pensar un rato
afirmando el 'tuntuneo',⁹
a ver si así delecto
con claridez mi retrato.
(Parra, 1998, p. 28)

First, I request permission⁸
to translate the guitar;
Next, I say it was Parra
Who gave me existence.
If I lack eloquence
To weave the narration
I stop to think for a while
tuning the 'tuntuneo',
Let's see if I can spell
my portrait clearly.

'12 de agosto, día de mi mamita', carta
[August 12, the day of my mum, letter]

...

Nueve dedos que rigen la simpleza
Que ha de tener mi próxima arpillera
Nueve dedos pintores, nueve yemas
Nueve soldados rasos en las cuerdas
De una guitarra bruja de anticuecas
O de un lienzo estirado en la madera
De una cosa que sale y que revienta
Y que me pone el pecho como greda
(Parra, 2011, pp. 163-164)

Nine fingers that govern simplicity
That my next arpillera must have
Nine painter-fingers, nine yolks
Nine low-soldiers on the strings
From a witch-guitar of anticuecas
Or from a canvas stretched out in the wood
Of a thing that comes out and bursts
And that makes my chest like clay

The first stanza above comes from the third *décima* written by Violeta Parra which, I propose, outlines, frameworks and epitomizes her interdisciplinary artwork, as well as describing key concepts of her oeuvre that I hope to unveil throughout this thesis. Specifically, Parra reveals that she resorts to visual elements in order to verbally "spell" her image. It means that she uses an abstract process of creation and translation: from language to visuality, and conversely. As she acknowledges, Parra takes elements from one place and inserts them into another. Parra seems to poetically translate between different art forms. The rules say that you spell out your name with words/syllables, play your music with sounds, and paint/embroider your image with figures/colours. The

⁸ All translations from Spanish to English are mine unless otherwise indicated.

⁹ In her research *Cantos Folklóricos Chilenos*, Parra states that 'tuntuneo' means 'punteo', which in English can be translated as the melody played by the guitar.

interesting thing in this *décima* is that Parra uses a literary word (the Spanish *deletréar* [spell]) for visual purposes; a word traditionally used to pronounce syllables and words is poetically used to visually represent her face. Similarly, the second strophe comes from a letter Parra wrote in 1963, in which she poetically describes her interdisciplinary artwork; what she was doing in Paris, less than one year before exhibiting at the Musée des arts Decoratifs, Palais du Louvre. I consider this hendecasyllable-verse letter a good illustration of the art forms, and the underlying ideology and foundations of Parra's interdisciplinary art - I will return to these literary works in Chapter Five. In France, Parra was able to incorporate herself into a multicultural centre where the most famous intellectuals and artists from around the world converged, getting feedback and compliments from renowned Chilean artist Roberto Matta (1911-2002), among others (Parra, 2011, p. 182). Parra was, however, not always able to appreciate life in a great multicultural city because she was preoccupied with earning a living¹⁰. Yet, Parra's exhibition at the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Palais do Louvre was going to be a distinctive landmark, incorporating music and live performance in the same way as she had in Parque Forestal Chile and then developed in La Carpa de la Reina, as I shall explain in the second chapter. Paris was one of the most important places where the idea of interrelationships between the art forms were developed by theorists and artists from around the world, but it also had a significant history. I think it is worth briefly reviewing here the foundations and theories about the interrelationship between the arts in mid-twentieth century Europe in order to identify the differences and distinctiveness of Parra's interdisciplinary art, but also to distinguish whether she followed any particular artistic movement.

Although the core from which Parra conceived her interdisciplinary art seems to come from Chilean rural practices (Parra, 1965, 2013), as we shall see in this chapter, Parra commenced her interdisciplinary activity after returning to Chile from her first journey to Europe. While Parra admired and learned from the oral traditions, she also admired the visual art of Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall and Joan Miró, and the music of Frederic Chopin, Ludwig van Beethoven and the Beatles (Morales, 2003, p. 83; Parra, 2011, p. 52). Parra lived in Paris - with short stays in Geneva - between 1954 and 1956, on her first trip, and 1962 to 1965 during her second stay (Parra, 2011, pp. 226-228). Although current scholarship still struggles to successfully categorize and delimit the boundaries of Parra's oeuvre, there are two main bases of consensus: on the one hand, that Parra's oeuvre should be addressed within the context of the tensions between

¹⁰ In a letter, Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 185) wrote: "Of course art does not give to live; Art comes to bear its true fruit when the creator's body is devoured by earthworms. So, to get incomes, my guitar is always on the front line. Although the people interested in paintings, sculptures and tapestries are many, buyers are almost invisible".

social classes, and on the other, within the tensions between the popular and the cultivated arts, in the context of the continuing ideological dominance of high culture over its subaltern counterpart (García-Canclini, 1990; Morales, 2003; Pinochet, 2007; Uribe 2002). This complex background, or synthesis, that Parra fused in her oeuvre, and whose roots are based on traditional and modern elements (Morales, 2003, pp. 33-34), raises the methodological challenge of approaching Parra from a classically informed perspective and considering the historical viewpoint in order to explain this interdisciplinary work. To do so, I will briefly look at the history of art and music in the next pages in order to explore the interrelationship between art forms, the artists who created in more than one artform, and the specifics of what they did, and how.

First, let us start by addressing some basics. For example, music, which derives from the Greek *mousike*, means “the art of the muses,” and was used to describe music, poetry, dance, and elementary education as a ‘mnemonic device’ of preserving the wisdom of the culture, before the emergence of alphabetic writing (Greene et al., 2012, p. 903). It is suggested that early evidence of primitive music shows “that melodies and rhythms precede words, [and] that the first step toward poetry was the fitting of words to pre-existing musical patterns” (Ibid.).

Music, poetry, and visual arts have been linked since ancient times not simply because they can express and represent through words, sounds and figures, but also because of their shared history that can be traced back to Greek and Roman mythology. For example, after Pythagoras established the mathematical principle by which pitch in music could be measured through the length of a string, Aristotle linked “the lowest-pitched note to white”, and “the highest-pitched note to black”, while all notes in between, from low to high pitch, were linked to corresponding grey values (van Campen, 2010, p. 45).

Already in the Hellenistic period, the nine muses [Appendix 2], the inspiring goddesses of song, poetry, arts and sciences, were recognised. Interestingly, many of them were customarily depicted with a musical instrument such as the lyre - Terpsichore and Calliope, a cornet - Clio, and with panpipes and aulos - Euterpe (Anderson and Mathiesen, 2001). Similarly, the Greek hero Orpheus embodied the relationship between arts as a poet whose “sweet tones of his lyre [...] soften[ed] the hearts of warriors and turn their thoughts to peace, just as it could tame the wildest of the beasts”, and therefore, his character as a music player has been strongly associated with “charms, spells and incantations” (Guthrie, 1935, pp. 39-40).

Likewise, an age-old idea is still postulated, that “music is the language of the gods” because it provides another means of expression for human beings that is different

to words (Wescott, 1983; Gordon-Seifert, 2011). Furthermore, the ability of music as a capable and powerful communication tool to express ideas, feelings, and moods is also similar to the notion of music as a language. There has been endless debate over the music's communicative capacity, and how it may work. For example, around the sixteenth century, a systematic use of rhetorical figures of verbal discourse in music was formulated, in which speech was infused with passionate language by using key concepts such as *inventio* (finding the argument); *dispositio* (ordering the argument); *elocutio* (style); *memoria* and *pronuntiatio* (delivery), with the aim of moving (*movere*), delighting (*delectare*), and instructing (*docere*) (Wilson et al., 2001).

Between the thirteenth century and sixteenth century a medieval Latin term, 'coloratura' or 'colour', was widely used to designate "florid figuration or ornamentation, particularly in vocal music" (Jander and Harris, 2001). Also, the medieval educational system based on the idea of the liberal arts of classical antiquity consisted of different stages of learning in which music and verbal arts were not considered on the same level.¹¹ In this period, the Italian humanist Franchino Gaffurio (1451-1522) wrote his *Theorica Musicae* (1492), illustrating the Greek foundations of music theory within the Quadrivium as "a science of numbers proportionate to sounds that measures the differences of low from high sounds through sense and reason" (Fuller, 1995, p. 119). In 1560, the Italian historian Girolamo Mei (1519-1594) proposed "an Aristotelian system of communicative arts (*arti fattive*) that brought together the mimetic media of music, rhetoric, poetry and the visual arts" that became a key notion in the development of opera. Meanwhile, the Italian artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527-1593) is thought to have been the first to test the correspondences between music and colour in the same fashion as Aristotle by placing strips of painted paper on the lower pitched parts of the gravicembalo, while "green and blue coloured the higher pitched parts in white" (van Campen, 2010, p. 46)

Later, Joachim Burmeister's *Musica poetica* (1606) established a theoretical framework for composing music within the framework of the verbal arts of the Trivium, analysing authors such as Josquin Desprez, to illustrate the analogy between musical figures and rhetorical devices. Likewise, German musicians and theorists around the seventeenth century started to use the term *Musica poetica* for works whose structure was in close relationship with the sound and meaning of a text: the madrigals, or word-paintings, from the Renaissance are thought to be the first examples of these musical

¹¹ The first one was the Trivium that taught the verbal arts, such as rhetoric. The second was the Quadrivium that taught the numerical arts: arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy.

figures.¹² In *Music of the Troubadours*, Elizabeth Aubrey explains that the European model of *art de trobar*, that dates back to the twelfth century, seems to have historically considered music and poetry separately:

But even though poetic and musical style and structure were devised according to the tools particular to each art, they must have interacted to some degree because the troubadours composed with the delivery of a song very much in mind. The processes involved in conceiving, arranging, and expressing one's idea through words and music may have been so intertwined at the moment of performance that they occurred almost simultaneously. (Aubrey, 1996, p. 79)

The famous English physicist of the seventeenth century Isaac Newton (1642-1727) also tried to find a mathematical system that could scientifically explain the extent to which musical tones and colour tones correspond to each other by frequencies [Appendix 3].¹³ This led to the creation of a colour harpsichord called *clavecin oculaire* by Louis-Bertrand Castel,¹⁴ a French mathematician, that engaged renowned composers such as Jean-Philippe Rameau (van Campen, 2010, p. 47; Jewanski, 2001). Similarly, in 1746 Charles Batteaux wrote a treatise called *The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle* which was probably the first attempt to theorise the interaction and relationship between poetry and painting based on Platonic and Aristotelian thought. Batteaux established his theory on the fine arts which consisted of the imitation of the beautiful in nature in the same fashion as Horace. This was the period of the revival of Greek art, and its plastic arts, as a model for European authors. This was certainly the case for German art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann in one of his most influential books, *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* (1755), where he uses the male body of the Trojan priest, Laocoön [Appendix 4] with his two sons, suffering to death, to establish “noble simplicity and quiet grandeur” as the defining aesthetic characteristic of transference from the verbal to the plastic arts (Konzett, 2015, p. 7).

¹² “As rhetoric and poetry were conjoined in the *novae poeatriae* [...] rhetorical elements of style embedded in the poetic text were mirrored in the musical settings. The shared concern is a concept of stylistic elegance based [...] on rhetorical figures of ‘sound’ (Stevens, 1992) such as repetition, alliteration, assonance, syllable count, rhyme, metrics and rhythmicity. These constitute a kind of verbal music that could be reflected in analogous, though essentially different, gestures of the musical setting such as the alignment of cadence and rhyme, the coordination of tenor repetitions with significant words, and the alignment of matching vowels in polytextual works” (Wilson et al., 2001)

¹³ In his book *Optiks* (1704), Newton found that “the distribution of white light in a spectrum of colours is analogous to the musical distribution of tones in an octave,” identifying “seven discrete light entities, that he then matched to the seven discrete notes of an octave.” (van Campen, 2010, p. 47)

¹⁴ “Castel noted that painters often adopted the vocabulary of music, speaking of colour tones, colour harmonies and even colour dissonances, while musicians described mingled chords as imitating *chiaroscuro*” (Jewanski, 2001).

In this period, the Enlightenment, the first critical writings on the comparison between the verbal and pictorial arts appeared. In his influential text *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766), the German art critic Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781) addressed the boundaries between the arts in Winckelmann's account.¹⁵ Overall, Lessing criticises Winckelmann's interpretation of how a poem is represented and emulated in a visual craft, stressing the difference between the poetical representation of Virgil that underscores the priest's screams and the visual representation of the Rhodian sculptures where the priest does not seem to scream. Lessing highlights the limitations of each art form, in which poetry represents actions that develop in time as objects while painting can only represent concrete objects in a limited spatial timeframe. One significant figure who worked in more than one art form was the English poet, painter and printmaker William Blake (1757-1827), at the end of the eighteenth century. Although he was barely recognized during his lifetime, Blake's symbolic and enigmatic oeuvre stands as one of the most significant examples of the relationship between visual and written art forms, such as his conceptual collection of fifty-five illustrated poems, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1789-1794) [Appendix 5].¹⁶

These summarized accounts provide a good example of the relationship between the art forms in Western culture, exposing not just the willing transference or translation of one artistic language to another, but the implications and issues regarding form and content, mainly raised by art critics. However, music was not part of this debate about the transference of artistic values. As we have seen, we could say that the most important aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century was 'imitation' of nature which turned painting into mainstream while poetry, music and the other arts sought to 'imitate' by using words, sounds, and inner meanings. However, by the end of this century an idea would emerge that sought to synthesize form with substance (Bright, 1984, p. 77).

¹⁵ From *Laocoön* representations, he questioned a popular quotation from Horace's *Ars Poetica* (c. 20 bC), 'ut pictura poesis', which proposed the idea that poetry should achieve sufficient evocative capacity to arouse in the viewer the same sensation that the painting would produce. A distinction between poetry and painting would be based on the "whole similarity" of the effects that poetry and plastic arts should produce on the spectator.

¹⁶ Roman Jakobson (1987, p. 486) compared the literary and pictorial interrelations of the verses and the engraved work but rejected Gotthold Lessing's distinction between painting and literature: "in this connection it seems to me suitable to restate the remarkable analogy between the role of grammar in poetry and the painter's composition based on a latent or patent geometrical order or on a revulsion against geometrical arrangements".

Landmarks

The nineteenth century was characterised by a distinctive cohort of artists who deliberately created artworks that made direct reference to other art forms, especially in musical works. For example, in 1858, Austrian composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was inspired by his appraisal of Italian paintings, sculpture, and literature, to compose a piano series called 'Deuxième Année de Pèlerinage: Italie', in which the titles make direct reference to the art pieces studied. For example, *Sposalizio* refers to Raphael's painting *The Marriage of the Virgin*; *Il penseroso*, to Michelangelo's statue, and poet Francesco Petrarca's sonnets, and *Après une lecture de Dante: Fantasia Quasi Sonata* was written, as the title implies, after reading Dante (Eckhardt et al., 2001).¹⁷

Musical romanticism made a significant contribution to the theoretical debate over interrelationships between the arts in the form of German composer Richard Wagner (1818-1883), who dedicated himself to writing a series of theoretical essays on what he called 'the art work of the future'. *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (1849) [art and revolution] was going to be the first writing to establish a Greek drama-based model for a type of opera liberated from the simple entertainment. Based on the ancient Greek model, Wagner wrote *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (1849) and *Oper und Drama* (1850–51) where he developed the concept of the reunification of the arts, which he called a 'total work of art' (Millington et al., 2002). The central argument for this *Gesamtkunstwerk* was the need for an integrated participation by artists from different disciplines as community to bring out the expressive potential of music, poetry, dance, architecture, painting and sculpture as a unified aesthetic for Greek drama, in a similar way as described by Lessing.

In 1874, the Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881) wrote the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition*.¹⁸ After having been introduced to Schumann's musical fantasies related to poetry and visual images, Mussorgsky decided to represent Victor Hartmann's paintings and drawings by describing each painting in a series of musical pieces, in a similar vein to Schumann. "Art is a means of communicating with people, not an aim in itself", declared Mussorgsky, conveying the strong influence of Russian

¹⁷ The German composer Robert Schumann (1810-1856), who also wrote literary pieces after quitting the concert hall; in 1833, he asserted: "the educated musician will be able to derive as much usefulness from the study of a Madonna by Raphael as will a painter from a Mozart symphony" (Daverio and Sams, 2001).

¹⁸ Mussorgsky was inspired by the posthumous exhibition of traditional Russian sketches, watercolours, and writings by the architect Víctor Hartmann (1834-1873). Hartmann was part of the group of artists who researched and drew inspiration from Russia's unwritten culture, such as folk song and peasant handicraft, during the 1860s (Russ, 1992, p. 2).

nationalism in his musical language as a self-taught composer (Bricard, 2002, p. 8). Overall, *Pictures at an Exhibition* comprises ten short pieces, and a recurring interlude named *promenade*, in a rondo and a free-sonata style that uses the traditional folk music of Russia in a mixture of modal and tonal languages to bring “on to a higher plane the mixture of tiny piano pieces he played with his mother and also in the saloons of St Petersburg, and the folk music he heard in the countryside” (Russ, 1992, p. 3). Alfred Frankenstein (1939, pp. 286-287) identified seven of Hartmann’s visual works that are linked to the oeuvre that describe Hartmann’s travels across Russia. For example, the ninth piece ‘Izbushka na kuryikh nozhkakh’ (Baba Yaga) represents musically the painting *The hut of Baba Yaga on hen's legs. Clock in the Russian style* [Appendix 6]; it is “a clock in the form of Baba Yaga's hut on fowl's legs. Mussorgsky added the witch's flight in a mortar”.

Later in the nineteenth century, aesthetic theory, as written by art critics and historians, would systematically include music within the art interrelationship debate. In 1888, the English literary and art critic Walter Pater (1839-1894) wrote *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, in which he addresses the relationship between poetry and pictorial arts, looking at their differences rather than their common denominators. This is now best remembered for a famous line for which he was celebrated, for identifying form and content in the abstract beauty of art: “All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music” (Pater, 2013, p. 106).¹⁹ From a musicological perspective, Richard Leppert’s *The Sight of Sound* (1993), analyses the ways music and painting have been linked to the human body for representing, translating and performing social meanings from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century in northern European culture:

The “image” of the activity is reproduced in the “mind’s eye” of the reader of that account: the reader’s eyes confront words, which in turn produce *linguistic* images. The representation of musical activity in art, by contrast, remains specifically visual, “translating” the three-dimensional and sonoric world into a two-dimensional and silent “argument” for and about the world. [...] Music’s effects and meanings [...] in painting must be rendered visually only. The way of seeing hence incorporates the way of hearing: the artist must produce images in such a way that their meanings will be congruent with those produced by sight and sound together in the lived experience of the original and intended viewer. To render visually meaningful the *acoustic* phenomenon of music. The artist engages semiotic codes that operate *as a sight* when music is actually made in real life. (Leppert, 1993, p. xxi)

¹⁹ Pater (2013, p. 109) states: “It is the art of music which most completely realizes this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form... Therefore, although each [other than music] has its own incommunicable element, its untranslatable order of impressions... yet the arts may be represented as continually struggling after the law or principle, to a condition which music alone completely realizes”.

The Twentieth Century

The field of interrelation between art forms is vast and stimulating, and it maintained its relevance in the twentieth century after significant authors had established the poetical basis for the relation between arts²⁰. The Russian composer Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) is a good example, being part of the Romantic period but also an exponent of theme and gesture as a musical language that transcended tonality. Scriabin's symphony *Prométhée, Le Poème du Feu*, includes "an enigmatic musically notated part for an electric organ of lights, along with Symbolist texts concerning light and electricity and the synaesthetic poetry of fire" (Dimova, 2009, p. 3). This pioneering piece, in particular Scriabin's colour-tonality analogy, led to several studies in the twentieth century of the correlation between sounds and colours (Galeyev and Vanechkina, 2001; Mirka, 1996). Scriabin's synaesthesia and interartistic ideas led him to conceive - with the help of an engineering friend - a twelve-lamp light-and-colour electric keyboard of lights [Appendix 7] called *Luce* "which would accompany the glimmering music for "Prometheus" and enhance visually the music's fiery imagery" (Dimova, 2009, p. 2).

The Lithuanian musician and visual artist Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875-1911),²¹ was a pioneer for the idea of 'musical painting' in which musical elements organize visual structures such as fugues [Appendix 8], sonatas and preludes (Fedotov, 1995). Scholars have studied a number of reasonable correlations between his music and paintings (Kato, 1976), the symmetry structure of his music and the use of polyphony as a musical element in his paintings (Fedotov, 1995). The influential Russian literary scholar Roman Jakobson (1970) developed his aesthetic ideas on the literature-visual arts relationship by using Henri Rousseau's *The Dream* (1910) and its poem, and the spatial scheme made from a Paul Klee²² poem, *Octastisch* (1903) as a structurally analogous map in taking into account Lessing's ideas. Overall Jakobson demonstrated the feasibility of comparing linguistic elements such as phonemic, metrical and

²⁰ A very cited work by French poet Charles Baudelaire is frequently engaged with the poetical sense of synesthesia: 'Correspondences' (Baudelaire, 2012, p. 10).

²¹ He started the conservatory in Warsaw, Poland, in 1894 where befriended a Polish composer who introduced him to visual art, and later led them to get enrolled to the Warsaw School of Fine Arts in 1904. Although Čiurlionis had a short life, he successfully managed to create around four hundred pieces of music and around three hundred paintings, many of which are interrelated in many ways.

²² Klee was also trained in music, which was reflected in some artworks such as *Fugue in red* (1921) and presented some of his thoughts on visual and musical relationships in prose, in his book *On Modern Art*. (Klee, 1948, p. 31)

grammatical elements with visual diagrams, as illustrated in Paul Klee's *Individualisierte Hohenmessung der Lagen*, 1930 (Wyman, 2004, p. 150).

Similarly, the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) played a key role in the current idea of visual representation of music in painting, mainly by his writings. For example, in *Point and Line to Plane* (1979), Kandinsky developed his idea – first expressed in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1977) – of the role of point in nature, art and music, and its combinations with line that results in a unique visual language by using Beethoven's Fifth Symphony score to illustrate how he *translates music into painting* [Appendix 9]. Also, in his search for synaesthesia, Kandinsky observed that "harmony lies not only in a clear-cut scheme but also in a clear rhythmic pattern" (2005, p. 182). However, long before this, he (Kandinsky et al., 2005, p. 190) had said: "Sound, color, word! In their innermost core these methods are wholly identical: their final goal obliterates external differences and reveals their inner identity".

Argentinian artist Alejandro Xul Solar (1887-1963) is an interesting case from Latin America and probably one of the first interdisciplinary artists to emerge from the region. Many of his paintings contain elements of musical references and others whose titles make direct reference to music [Appendix 10]. Interestingly, Solar created the 'Colour keyboard harmonium', where he applied his correspondence theory between colours and sounds by modifying a piano in a similar way to Skriabin (Cristiá, 2004, p. 305). Furthermore, Cintia Cristia researched further about the interrelationship between the art forms, formulating a methodological framework from which she seeks to answer the question "how does a drawing become a melody?" through three concepts (Ibid., p. 13). The first concept uses Theodor Adorno's term 'convergence' to describe "the interaction between two or more arts in the same work. In opera, for example, music, drama, literature and the visual arts converge" (Ibid., p. 5). The second concept presented is 'migration' as "the passage of an element, of a technique, or of subject matter from one art to the other", discriminating between three main levels. The first level of interchange is the "emotional" which tries to "evoke the atmosphere of a piece of music while listening to it". The second level is "conceptual", which is "where the migration from one field to another is achieved by resorting to an idea or a concept". The third is the "material" level which "is based on the correspondence or association of pairs of constitutive elements and/or analogous parameters [...] as in Kandinsky's correspondence between a point and a single percussive sound" (Ibid., p.6), which seems to be very close to the correspondences settled by Etienne Souriau in his book *La Correspondance des arts, éléments d'esthétique comparée* (Souriau, 1969).

During the second part of the twentieth century there were a number of interesting cases of interdisciplinary musicians around the world; some renowned examples came from Anglo-Saxon popular music. This is the case with Canadian singer and songwriter Joni Mitchell (1943), who started singing folk music in the early sixties and launched her first album *Song to a Seagull* [Appendix 11] in 1968 in the United States of America. Mitchell's interest in visual art paralleled her interest in music – she adorned most of her albums with her own artwork (Mitchell, 2017), and specifically in 1969 when she painted a number of oils on canvas such as *Portrait of Bob Dylan Seated*. In an interview from 2000, Mitchell expressed her interdisciplinary perspective on the arts: "What I think people might find interesting is that it is not often you find somebody who expresses themselves with regularity in three arts." On her own website she claims, "I sing my sorrow, and I paint my joy." (Ibid.). Bob Dylan (1941) and Patti Smith (1946) are also worth considering here, the former mainly because of the way his lyrics have come to be considered as poetry. This is exemplified by the great debate about the unprecedented achievement of a musician who is not a formal writer winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016, and also the ekphrastic role he says that painting had in crafting his lyrics, influenced by a mysterious painting teacher, especially in the mid-1970s (Gill and Odegard, 2004). Smith is worth considering because her visual art and poetry dates back to the 1970s when she started her musical career and won a visual art competition, and worked in photography and in poetry for The Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church (Smith, 2010, p. 12). Despite the fact all of these musicians lived at the same time as Parra, specifically during the 1950s and the 1960s, there seems to be no other direct point of comparison, although their work shares many features in common, such as political activism and folk themes.

As we have seen, there is a long history of interrelationships between the different arts in Western culture and has engaged renowned artists. Its development, however, was most pronounced from the eighteenth century onwards, during which time numerous artworks were deliberately created from other artworks in other media. Yet, as Gary Alan Fine (2006, p.7) acknowledges, the official art history, "has a long distinguished pedigree" of which self-taught artists are not always part, and are therefore usually labelled as naïve and innocent, and classified within the category of Folk Art. On the other hand, we have briefly seen that art history provides a good introduction to contextualising Parra's interdisciplinary oeuvre, specifically through examples that may help as antecedents of authors who took elements from one media to another, such as the famous Kandinsky translation of musical elements to painting. I neither attempt to aesthetically compare Parra to Kandinsky nor place her in that specific tradition – we shall see the differences and similarities at the end of this chapter - but I do consider that

Parra shared similar ideas to these artists who brought musical and lyrical elements to painting with the idea of translating poetical elements. In this regard, the idea of “translating elements” may offer a conceptual framework from which to study the connections between Parra's music, poetry and visual art, in which her work can be understood as an original poetical language.

Translation

Parra declared that the first art form she learned was music, when she learned to play guitar at the age of seven years – though she could barely hold the guitar - but her first creative work was a song – the lyrics - at the age of nine as well as some verses (Vicuña, 1958, pp. 72-73). Later, however, when starting her artistic career as a singer-songwriter Parra claimed that the first artistic genre she composed in was the improvised verses known as *payas*, having written two hundred and forty-two quatrain verses because it was very easy for her to write them (Navasal, 1954, p. 18). Thus, we can argue that Parra had a strong poetical impetus from which she started “to weave the narration,” as a springboard for “spelling her portrait” in order to “transpose the guitar” as expressed in her autobiography. In other words, Parra viewed each artistic language literally as a system that allows for translatability or renewal because separately they each have their own communication system, namely through the hearing and sight, but at the same time, they share similarities in what they express.

On Poetics

Let us begin by defining some basic concepts concerning the way Parra translated her own language into different media. The first two chief questions must help us to understand the notion of poetics and translation in art. So, what does poetics mean? There are several ways of defining and understanding poetics. For example, the simplest definition describes it as the “theoretical and practical study of poetry” (Greene et al., 2012, p. vii), but specifically it deals with the analysis of verbal structures (Jakobson, 1987, p. 63). On these grounds, the literary text is the subject of interpretation and description aiming “at a knowledge of the general laws that preside over the birth of each work”, and it is broadly understood “as the manifestation of an abstract and general structure” that “is the expression of ‘something’, and the goal of such studies is to reach this ‘something’ through the poetic code.” (Newton, 1997, pp. 86-87).

Poetics comes from the Greek word *Poiesis* which means ‘making’, since there was no specific word for ‘art’ in the Greek language. However, it is said that the term

'poetics' was coined after *Poetics* (335 BCE), in which Aristotle used the word 'poetry' to develop a theory of literature in which to establish the main features of a 'good poem'. Aristotle (1922, p. 7) regards the epic, drama, and dithyrambic poetry as a mimesis, a common principle it shares with music, dancing, painting and sculpture: "However, they differ from one another in three respects: either in using different media for the representation, or in representing different things, or in representing them in entirely different ways."

The plot, defined as the 'whole' and 'unity' of the parts, defines the quality and principle of imitation or representation in poetry, and is divided into three categories. The first criterion is the 'media' of the poetic imitation; for example, the representation in painting is made through imitation of colours and shapes, while poetry "is produced by rhythm, language, or 'harmony', either singly or combined." In music, representation or imitation is produced by rhythm and harmony, and in dancing it is produced by rhythm alone imitating "character, emotion, and action, by rhythmical movement"; and finally lyric poetry is the "art which imitates by means of language alone, and that either in prose or verse [...] may either combine different metres or consist of but one kind - but this has hitherto been without a name" (Ibid., pp.7-9).

The second criterion settled by Aristotle is the "object of poetic imitation" which is defined as "men in action" who must be represented as either better or worse than in real life.²³ The third criterion is the 'manner of poetic imitation' which "may be in form either dramatic narrative, pure narrative (including lyric poetry), or pure drama (Ibid., p.1). Overall, Aristotle provided an early example of the ways in which poetry, but also musical and visual techniques, may use mimesis to represent and convey from another medium as a principle in the art of "making good poetry". Similarly, we can argue that one of the most important values of good poetry as defined by Aristotle is its ability to transform, translate, interpret, transmit, and so forth. The term poetics thus has traditionally been part of literary studies, but it has also served as a theoretical framework from which to examine, structure and define principles of coherence, unity, logic, and value of a literary - work of art. Taking into consideration the foregoing theories and concepts, I highlight Oporto's (2013, p. 145) definition of Parra's poetics as the "the artist's worldview, which emerges from the analysis of her aesthetic procedures and the processes of her work"; a definition which also informs this study. Thus, Parra's poetics

²³ For example, in poetry, Homer makes men better than they are Cleophon as they are; Hegemon the Thasian, the inventor of parodies, and Mcochares, the author of the Deiliad, worse than they are"; the painter "Polygnotus depicted men as nobler than they are, Pauson as less noble, Dionysius drew them true to life, "comedy aims at representing men as worse, tragedy as better than in actual life" (Aristotle, 1992, pp.11-13).

may be manifested in more than one art procedure, and from one aesthetic organization to another.

On Translation

As I mentioned previously, one interesting, and at the same time, unique feature in Parra's oeuvre is the fact that she translated similar poetics through different media, by using sounds, words, and visual figures to convey Chilean cultural customs. As she had found in her field research (Parra, 2013), Parra noticed she could better represent her culture by doing the same as people traditionally did in rural areas of Chile. Some women played and sang beautiful and singular music, but also wove and sewed fabrics with threads and wool, and created clay figures with their hands as we shall see in the next chapter. In a manner, arguably she wanted to synthesize all of these practices herself by using both symbolic and literary languages. Most of these poetical languages are understood in Chile, but also in the rest of Latin America because they share an idiomatic culture. However, Parra had to find her own way of translating and conveying these local symbolisms and languages to be understood in countries such as the USSR, Poland, France, The United Kingdom, Finland, Germany, each of them with their own language and culture. In this sense, Parra's artistic experience calls to mind points made by Walter Benjamin regarding translation, specifically when this practice suggests a varied use of symbols, metaphors and analogies in the quest for meaning. Benjamin notes that

Translation thus ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the innermost relationship of languages to our answer. It cannot possibly reveal or establish this hidden relationship itself; but it can represent it by realizing it in embryonic or intensive form. This representing of something signified through an attempt at establishing it in embryo is of so singular a nature that it is rarely met with in the sphere of nonlinguistic life. In its analogies and symbols, it can draw on other ways of suggesting meaning than intensive—that is, anticipative, intimating-realization. As for the posited innermost kinship of languages, it is marked by a peculiar convergence. This special kinship holds because languages are not strangers to one another, but are, a priori and apart from all historical relationships, interrelated in what they want to express. (Benjamin, 2004, p. 255)

Eventually, Parra had to speak a foreign language to explain, transmit, and communicate her own art not just in France but in both the USSR and elsewhere in Europe. For example, in 1962, Parra sent a letter to a friend from Geneva in which she referred to the language issue she had faced abroad when trying to explain herself and how she overcame it, by using a metaphor to translate and summarize this language issue:

One year and eight months that I went out into the world to serve my cup of tea among families who drink through the eyes and the senses. They do not understand my words, but their faces turn bright, and they stutter with emotion

when they want to spread that mysterious thread between their blood and mine, which is called love. If you saw, Adriana, how the wrinkles of the old ones shine, and how the clouds of their eyes clarify when I give them my soul in a cueca or in a painting. In that I am around here, handing out baskets of love. I'm not singing to be applauded, I swear and believe me. (Parra, 2011, p. 139)

In the scholarship on literary translation, there are some interesting concepts worth consideration that could provide a good theoretical framework for the notion of 'translating poetics'. In fact, translation studies encompass a variety of approaches – in the same way when dealing with the notion of Poetics - which we can consider as interdisciplinary because of the concepts, perspectives, theories and definitions, among others. For example, the influential semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce (1974, p. 127) claimed that 'meaning' is the "translation of a sign into another system of signs"; and "interpretation is merely another word for translation"(Peirce, 1967, p. 388). Although Peirce's translation ideas are based on a tradition, his theories and definitions were used as a starting point for linguistics, semiotics, translation studies, and a vast body of scholarship.²⁴

For example, in 1959, Jakobson (1987, p. 429) claimed that "the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign"; providing three broad categories of interpretation of a verbal sign: a (rewording) translation within the same language that he called 'Intralingual Translation'; a (proper) translation into another language that he called 'Interlingual Translation' - or 'transmutation' - and a(n) intersemiotic) transposition into another nonverbal system of symbols. Thus, Jakobson (Ibid., p. 434) concluded that "poetry by definition is untranslatable, and the only possible translation is the 'creative transposition'". Jakobson's 'intersemiotic transmutation' thus enables the transference from a verbal art into music, dance, film, or painting. His formalist theory of language uses the concept of *dominant* "as the focusing component of a work of art; it rules, determines, and transforms the remaining components. [because] It is the dominant which guarantees the integrity of the structure" (Jakobson, 1987, p. 41). However, Jakobson (Ibid., p. 42) points out that the notion of 'dominant' goes beyond the poetic work and can be "in the art of a given epoch, viewed as a particular whole"; as the visual arts represent the acme of the Renaissance, while music was considered the supreme means of expression in Romantic art.

²⁴ Thomas Short (2003, p. 217) notes that "The popular view that the meaning of a sign is its translation by another sign is obviously mistaken. Meanings are what signs possess, it is not what signs are. The point of Peirce's so-called translation theory of meaning is, rather, that there are no meanings apart from signs. Even so, in his mature semeiotic, he identified meanings with interpretants not themselves significant. This avoids such absurdities as that of Eco's "unlimited semeiosis". An Peirce's divisions of interpretants enables us to account for the distinctions we make among varieties of poor translation, mistranslation, the untranslatable, and so on."

In his work *Mouse or Rat? Translation as a Negotiation*, Umberto Eco (2004, p. 104) acknowledges that one of the problems of translation is “how to render what one sees in words”. By using the rhetorical effect of *hypotyposis*, Eco tries to contextualize the challenge of representing visual scenes in words, arguing that he relies on the concept of *ekphrasis* to ensure that the translation really recreates the ‘picture’ originally written by words. The translator must be an interpretant, thus the transference must keep up the substance, or whatever it is expressing, represented by a linguistic sign. Because, according to Eco (Ibid., p. 92), “The real problem is to develop the ability to see the world as the poet saw it”, concluding that “translation is a matter of negotiation between the translator, the reader, and the original author. [...] [because] it is our engagement in isolating what is for us the deep sense of a text, and it is the goodwill that prods us to negotiate the best solution for every line” (Ibid., p.192). In this way, from Jakobson’s translation categories, Eco (Ibid., p. 1) claimed that the ‘Intersemiotic translation’ is “the transformation of a novel into a film, or of a painting into a poem and so on,” conveying the same things as the original. Translating enables the transference of ideas, poetics, concepts, themes, and so forth, from one medium to another; for example, says Eco (Ibid., p. 123), when Walt Disney’s *Fantasia* translated music into images we are talking about an ‘Intersemiotic translation’.

Eco also provides an interdisciplinary definition for Jakobson’s ‘Intralinguistic translation’ as a form of ‘reformulation’ in other semiotic systems, whereas he criticizes Jakobson’s ambiguity on his idea that interpretation is a form of translation. In music, says Eco (Ibid., p. 131), it is called [musical] ‘Transcription’ because “a musical piece is rewritten in a different key, or changed from [...] Dorian to the Phrygian mode”. But Eco (Ibid.) takes this idea further because “there are cases in which a given composition is transcribed for a different instrument”. By using the example of a Bach Solo Cello Suite transcribed for an alto recorder, Eco explains two effects of rewording. The first is that the melodic line is ‘transported’ without variations but the accompaniment ‘chords’ must be ‘translated’ into an arpeggio because the alto recorder cannot play more than one note at a time, so that it may (re)create the aural impression of playing the melodic line at the same time as the chords. And the second is that the transcription shifts the timbre from one instrument to another, meaning that the ‘substance’, both the harmonic and melodic content, may change for the listener as well.

In his book *Is That a Fish in Your Ear*, David Bellos deals with the different issues and challenges to be faced when making a text sound more idiomatic and natural in a foreign language, or taking one language to another because ‘selective’ or ‘decorative’ foreignism is only available in translation between languages with an established relationship (Bellos, 2012, p. 46). In Parra’s case, this meant that she had to overcome

the fact she could not use some localisms because European countries did not know enough about Chilean localisms. However, this may also have played a positive role because in being unknown these localisms could be perceived as an exotic 'other'. Parra faced a challenge identified by Bellos (Ibid., p. 42) who asks, "How then should the foreignness of foreign best be represented in the receiving language?" answering that "the most obvious way to make a text sound foreign" in order to keep its local values "is to leave parts of it in the original". For Bellos (Ibid., p. 338), "the practice of translation rests in two [human and dual] conditions" because "we speak different tongues, and see the world in ways that are deeply influenced by the particular features of the tongue that we speak", but at the same time "we are all the same - that [because] we can share the same broad and narrow kinds of feelings, information, understandings and so forth".

From literature studies, specifically from literary theory, there is an interesting contribution to the notion of a linguistic translation made by the Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin in his influential compiled essays titled *The Dialogic Imagination*. Focusing on the discourse in a novel, Bakhtin (1981, p. 295) differentiates the traditional monological discourse of a novel with what he calls a dialogic discourse which evidences the existence of multiple voices and consciences that speak through a set of cultural features and conditions: "the unity of a literary language is not a unity of a single, closed language system, but is rather a highly specific unity of several 'languages' that have established contact and mutual recognition with each other" and therefore "consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of *having to choose a language*". According to Bakhtin, this may be exemplified when

an illiterate peasant, miles away from any urban center, naively immersed in an unmoving and for him unshakable everyday world, nevertheless lived in several language systems: he prayed to God in one language (Church Slavonic), sang songs in another, spoke to his family in a third and, when he began to dictate petitions to the local authorities through a scribe, he tried speaking yet a fourth language (the official-literate language, "paper" language). All of these are *different languages*, even from the point of view of abstract socio-dialectical makers. (Ibid., pp. 295-296)

Similarly, arguably, Parra did speak dialogically in many languages in order to represent the multiple poetics - voices - of her culture. Still, having explored these influential ideas, it would be relevant to look at the extent of the practice and some sort of "theory of translation" in Parra's context. For example, can we find some references to link and compare the translation practice of Parra and her contemporaries in order to outline a profile? The first link may be Pablo Neruda, who began his pedagogy studies in the French language at the University of Chile in 1921, and who received the task of translating William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, in 1964. Neruda did not make a

literal translation,²⁵ rather he decided to recreate Shakespeare's text in a "translation-version", by "accommodating the language, making it more direct, more agile, less repetitive. And he sought that goal by suppressing, abbreviating, summarizing, concentrating, selecting examples, descriptions, images and complete fragments" (Ulloa Cardenas, 1997, p. 87).

Dario Ulloa Cárdenas (Ibid., p. 88) claims that Neruda's *Romeo and Juliet* translation shows the way the same text can be expressed in very different ways in the Spanish language, from Spain and from Chile; "The pomposity of the Hispanic version, more in line with the canons and medieval sonnets of the Shakespearian tragedy, does not agree with the way of speaking of the Latin American actors and audience of the twentieth century. In addition, the Spanish language of Castile is distinguished from the Spanish-American, as the American English is from the British". Overall, the original has been modified by adding parts and excluding parts, resulting in new different pieces closer to recreations than a conventional translation because translation goes beyond literal words. For Neruda, there is an ideological difference between the Spanish language from Latin America and the "original" one from Spain, because the latter is impregnated with Luis de Gongora's poetics, and became "golden" thanks to Francisco de Quevedo's "courtly elegance"; meanwhile Latin American poetry "is made of dusty stone, crushed lava, clay with blood. We do not know how to carve glass," criticizing those poets who keep the Iberian Spanish and do not adapt local features because "a single drop of Martin Fierro's wine or the murky honey of Gabriela Mistral leaves them in their place: well placed in the living room like vases with flowers from another place" (Neruda, 1974, p. 118).²⁶ More interestingly, in *Neruda's Ekphrastic Experience*, Hugo Méndez-Ramírez provides a significant study of the way Neruda's *Canto General* and Mexican mural art seem to converge and interplay. Besides providing a theoretical discussion of the relationship between verbal and visual representation, Méndez-Ramírez (1999, p. 32) states that the word ekphrasis, "comes from the Greek verb *ekphraissien*, which means 'to speak out' or 'to report in detail'. [but] In Hellenistic

²⁵ Neruda made translations from French and English, such as Marcel Schwob (*La Ciudad Dormiente*, 1923), Anatole France (*Páginas escogidas de Anatole France*, 1924), Rainer Maria Rilke (*Los Cuadernos de Malte Laurids Brigge*, 1926), Charles Baudelaire (*El Enemigo*, 1933), James Joyce (*Música de Cámara*, 1933), William Blake (*Visiones de las hijas de Albión*, 1935), Vladímir Mayakovsk (*El Pasaporte*, 1955), among others (Millares, 1995).

²⁶ Neruda (2011, p. 118) sees the Latin American Spanish language as part of a continuous process which was stopped in Europe when "The Spanish language became golden, after Cervantes, [because it] acquired a courtly elegance, lost the wild force that brought Gonzalo de Berceo, the Archpriest, lost the genital passion that still burned in Quevedo. The same happened in England, in France, in Italy. The excesses of Chaucer, of Rabelais, were castrated. Precious Petrarchization made emeralds, diamonds shine, but the source of the Greatness began to die out. This previous spring had to do with the whole man, with his width, its abundance and its overflow."

rhetoric, its meaning was broad and general [...] to refer to any verbal description of any sort, either in art or rhetoric". *Canto General's* first edition was published privately in México in 1950, with drawings by muralist painters Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros (Neruda, 1993, p. 1). According to Hugo Méndez-Ramírez, Neruda was able to provide the linguistic-poetical articulation that the Muralism ideological messages lacked:

It was the visual impulse, the ekphrastic desire, the archetropic force that moved the poet to transpose into linguistic verbal images the powerful visual text presented in the murals. *Canto general* is the ekphrastic representation of mural painting, sharing the same iconic codes. [...] The first half of the book is shown to be an independent complete book, which in general terms follows Diego Rivera's monumental mural [*Historia de México a través de los siglos*] at the National Palace [Appendix 12]. *Canto general* shares with this mural its essential narrative framework, starting before the *Conquista* and ending in the present. Neruda's ekphrastic versions were rather notional than actual, as we have seen, allowing him to borrow liberally from Rivera. The Mexican artist's mark is apparent in certain features of Neruda's poetry: idealization of pre-Columbian civilizations, a panoramic and synchronic view of history, *Canto general's* dialectical and binary structure, the concept of the "poeta del pueblo" or the artist as artisan, and the insertion of the artist in his own art object as a means of communion with the masses, the propagandistic tone that at times seems to cloud the poet's perspective, the avant-garde style, and finally, the encyclopedic nature of the volume. (Méndez-Ramírez, 1999, p. 204)

Let us consider now the figure whom we can assert with confidence to be a closer influence on Parra's translation ideas: Nicanor Parra. Although, Violeta's brother, Nicanor, translated Shakespeare's *King Lear* in 1992, his interest in Shakespeare and translation had been manifested since he went to study at Oxford, England, in 1949.²⁷ In an article published in 1992, María de la Luz Hurtado (2017) analysed and witnessed Nicanor's translation process.²⁸ It was not an easy task, just the opposite, because Nicanor was well aware of the previous attempts to translate Shakespeare's play into Spanish, because the Elizabethan English of Shakespeare has changed more in relation to present-day English than has the Spanish language since Cervantes' time. So Nicanor (Hurtado, 2017) concluded that "knowing English is very little help when translating Shakespeare". For this reason, he did not want to end up making up non-existent words as the result of literal translation from English into Spanish, distorting the original text

²⁷ In his article 'Té, margarita y austeridad. Nicanor Parra en la postguerra inglesa' (Binns, 2015), Niall Binns explores the influence of Parra's studies in Oxford on his antipoetry, specifically once he learned of William Blake, John Donne, Ezra Pound, W.H. Auden and T.S. Eliot. In his article '¿Qué hay en un nombre? Poemas y antipoemas u Oxford 1950', (Binns, 2011) Binns analyses Parra's 'Advertencia al Lector' influence from "Salutation the Second" by Pound, and from William Carlos Williams' Spring and All' prologue.

²⁸ It is based on the author's conversations with Nicanor Parra and part of the cast of *King Lear*, at the beginning of the rehearsals at the Teatro U. C. in Santiago de Chile.

because, according to Nicanor (Ibid.), "the Shakespearean language, it has been said, is a dark, enigmatic and sibylline language, full of black holes, at the same time, terribly synthetic and at times also flowery, difficult to understand. Shakespeare is very idiomatic, so you have to forget about translating it word by word". Rather, he (Ibid.) posits to transfigure the Shakespearean blank-verse text into poetics: "The real actors are neither Gloucester nor Edmond nor Lear himself, but the words [...] what matters is the linguistic relevance. The words sound good, then we cannot do anything but feel fascinated, enchanted by the verbal flow." In the literary form, Nicanor (Ibid.) highlights the Shakespearean verbal ability of varying the so-called blank verse by breaking the hendecasyllable – also known as the iambic pentameter – and combining it with other meters, which is connected with his own antipoetry:²⁹ "You have to get out of the grammatical metric, of the academic metric, and let the speech metric in. Once you combine the two metrics, the grammatical with the speech metric, then the world enters the dramatic text".

However, the most significant understanding of translation demonstrated by Nicanor (Ibid.) used a parallelism with musical practices: "Lear is written in a [musical] instrument that is the English language, so, I would like to be the transcriber of this composition to another instrument that is the Spanish language." In the same way as described by Umberto Eco in 2004, Nicanor thinks that the musical transcriber embodies the ideal translation to convey, transfer, communicate, and express something from one media to another. Similarly, Parra's translation occurs when something belonging to one place is transposed to another, as we shall see throughout this thesis.

²⁹ Nicanor (Hurtado, 2017) extends: "My own antipoems occupy this kind of blank verse. I have always been asked what an antipoem is and the most repeated response I have given, without realizing what it said, is: an antipoem is nothing other than a dramatic speech. A dramatic speech, by the way, it is a Shakespearean blank verse, that is, it is a hendecasyllable that lengthens and shortens, and oscillates between the academy, the street and the fair. I have been working in that way since long, I have even combined a verse of eleven syllables with one of one syllable, and verses with prose, I thought it was a great invention of mine, but the Elizabethans already knew these methods of work and Shakespeare occupies it in King Lear, where a large percentage of the work is written in prose, without knowing for sure which are verses and which are prose. This is very important: one could say that they are prosaic verses or that they are poetical prose."

Translating Poetics

In a letter from 1961, Violeta explained that her brother Nicanor had told her about the play *The Caretaker* by English author Harold Pinter (1930-2008). She, too, was deeply impressed when she went to see the play herself, describing the characters and the script, and pointing out that the theme could be applied to any country in the world. This is significant because it means that Parra learned from drama how to develop, and probably 'translate,' subjects from performative arts to other artforms:

Nicanor talked to me about a theatre piece, *The Caretaker*, what he tells me is amazing. Three characters: a mental patient, a vagabond, and a brother of the patient. The vagabond is like all vagabonds and shows the consequences when a person invites you to live in your home. It is interpreted very well. I think that for the first time, an immense door opens for the theater in Chile. The work is by Harold Pinter, English, but the theme is from any country. (I. Parra, 2011, p. 121).

For different reasons scholars were not very interested in either Parra's interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary agency until very recently. This is demonstrated by the fact she was barely regarded as a multifaceted artist even in the twentieth-first century. However, some authors have considered the significance of taking into account the 'other art forms' to fully understand her oeuvre. Although there have been many texts in which Parra's multifaceted agency is addressed as a distinctive quality of her oeuvre since her death, none of them have approached it analytically. For example, the first attempt came in 1992 with the book *Violeta Parra o la expresión inefable* by literary scholars Marjorie Agosín and Inés Dölz-Blackburn who sought to explore Parra's interdisciplinary activity by including a chapter where they approached Parra's paintings analytically. Agosín and Dölz-Blackburn (1992, p. 115) claimed that Parra's visual art "is an organic part of her poetry and life". Also, they (Ibid., p. 116) agree that Parra's art must be understood as an integral output in which "cannot separate Parra's poetic creation from the pictorial, or the folkloric" because the "purpose is to build a relationship between Parra's poetry and her oral text and poetry", and already questioning the notion of Parra's art as naive. The authors (Ibid., p. 119) also perceive a number of signs and features that exemplify this fact, concluding: "many of the images projected through Parra's poetry, and her creation and reworking of folk themes, are exemplified in these kinds of narrative paintings". Previously, Agosín (1987) had researched the arpilleras' activity in Chile in her book *Scraps of life: Chilean arpilleras*, concluding that Parra was the pioneer of the arpilleras movement in Chile in her depictions of "everyday life scenes". Yet, it was just inside the twenty-first century when a book analysed Parra's interdisciplinary activity. In *Violeta Parra: La Última Canción*, Chilean literary scholar Leonidas Morales (2003, p. 27) claimed that "all of Parra's art, both from the point of view

of its materials [...] its basic poetic forms [...], and as the instruments of singing [...] refer to the traditional Chilean culture of oral transmission” which, however, at the same time has been created and conditioned by her urban industrialized experience through an “artistic translation” that makes her artwork modern (Ibid., p. 66).

After having reunited and established Parra’s visual work in a permanent display at the Museo Palacio de la Moneda in Santiago de Chile, the Parra Foundation launched the book *Violeta Parra Obra Visual* in 2007, containing visual pieces with two essays that approach Parra’s visual language in the context of the rest of her oeuvre. The first essay, ‘Violeta Parra visual artist’, is written by art scholar Isabel Cruz de Amenábar (Parra, 2008, pp. 26-33) who claims that the analogies between visual and musical form expressed by Kandinsky are naturally expressed by Parra. The second essay is written by the artist and scholar, and Parra’s friend, José Ricardo Morales (Ibid., pp. 34-57), entitled ‘Violeta Parra the thread of her art’, in which he (Ibid., p. 37) claims that “the use of resources and procedures of an art, to lead them to another one, is one of the most important characteristics of her extensive labour, giving them the necessary unity through such transfers”, representing a common pattern of related elements. Morales (Ibid., p.45) also points out the artistic connections in Parra’s different arts, calling attention to her use of the *décima* where she talked in terms of “weaving the story”, adding that, for Parra, there are no boundaries between art’s lines, and that “poetic texts resemble fabrics, arpilleras become songs, and the line is colour”. Morales (Ibid., p.45) proposes “when it is stated that an arpillera is a painted song, the voice becomes colour, while the lyric voice is identified with the line of wool”. If we take Morales (Ibid., p.38) suggestion, it is possible to find the key fundamentals in the “*Décima III*” from Parra’s autobiography (Parra, 1998, p. 28), regarding this interdisciplinary approach. She says “First, I request permission to translate the guitar”; here we have her intention to translate musical elements. She continues: “If I lack eloquence to weave the narration”; now she mixes visual elements with language elements to weave the story. She finishes, “Let’s see if I can spell my portrait clearly”; here we see Parra’s intention for ‘spelling her portrait’, hence to mix language features with visual purposes, describing the interplay and consistency of their materially different creations; showing the interplay of sounds and words with colours and visual figures. Similarly, it can be argued that her visual creations contain musical elements. This idea is neither forced nor pretentious, since in 1957, she composed “*Los Manteles de Nemesio*” (Parra, 2011, p. 128), a voice and guitar musical tribute based on the name of an oil on canvas by Chilean painter Nemesio Antúnez.



Figure 1, Violeta Parra, no date, *Casamiento de negros*, oil on fabric, 104.5 x 182 cm, Nicanor Parra Collection.

Chilean scholar Jorge Montealegre (2011, p. 41) offers a valuable interdisciplinary approach in his book *Violeta Parra*, pointing out the significance of different symbols such as the “chicken figure” which is present as a motif in both Parra’s songs and her visual arts. Furthermore, a section is dedicated to Parra’s religiousness, exploring the religious, social and humoristic implications in her songs and visual works, highlighting the deep and unexplored links to Parra’s humour (Ibid., p.35). Similarly, I have approached Parra’s interdisciplinary art establishing the links between songs and visual pieces through the subject of “death” which is found in Parra’s poetry, music and visual arts by exemplifying the structure interrelationships between a song [track 1]³⁰ and a painting [Figure 1] that share the same title ‘*Casamiento de negros*’ (Escobar-Mundaca, 2012; 2015). Also, From the Bakhtinian perspective of intertextuality and dialogism, we can observe in this song how Parra takes a quatrain from Francisco de Quevedo in order to re-create the original text into a Chilean context. Finally, English art scholar Lorna Dillon realized the first comprehensive academic study, entitled *Parra’s visual art* (2013), in which she develops her hypothesis of Parra’s socio-political activist art in arpilleras, embroideries, collages and paintings. Dillon (2013, p. 227) considers Parra’s visual art as “oral narratives” where she “presents an exegesis of core ideas from the oral tradition, indeed from her own songs, in her visual art”. This valuable research focuses on the iconography and morphology that Parra used to represent “popular” and

³⁰ Accompanying DVD, separately in a volume which will be subject to an embargo.

“oral” culture, “indigenous” culture, “religion”, “history” and “politics”. However, the most significant contribution to the understanding of Parra’s interdisciplinary art is made in chapter two, ‘Translating Aesthetics’, where Dillon (Ibid., p. 222) explores how Parra translated “her ideas from one artistic genre to another”, and even through the concept of ekphrasis:

In [the painting] *El pájaro y la grabadora* [Figure 2] Parra translates her conception of artistic practice into a landscape painting: the silhouette of a woman merges with a scene of rolling hills and the bird motif appears upon the woman’s shoulder. Although the colours in the painting are distinctly modern, there is an echo with traditional artesanía: the rounded shape of the woman recalls the popular papier-mâché figurines found in Chilean artesanía [art-craft]. This bird is also interesting since it is carrying what appears to be a radio. (Dillon, 2013, p. 11)



Figure 2, Violeta Parra, n.d., *El pájaro y la grabadora*, oil on canvas, 122 x 148 cm, The Nicanor Parra Collection.

Dillon (Ibid., p. 226) highlighted this distinctive and interesting visual ability: “It is in Parra’s presentation of imagery from popular culture that the translation of ideas between her visual art and her music is most manifest”. In fact, Parra was going to translate these customs in works such as *Fiesta en casa de Violeta* [Figure 3], and *Fiesta*

en Casa de los Parra [Figure 4], and *Niños en fiesta* [Figure 5], where the cultural practices of dance and music are poetically translated. However, this is clearer in many paintings, arpilleras and papier-mache in which Parra uses the Chilean national dance, the cueca, to be translated into visual language such as *Los Parra* [Figure 6] and *La Cueca* [Figure 7]. In my previous work, I briefly discussed Kandinsky's (1977, p. 25) thinking in Parra's art: "Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand which plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul". Similarly, Swiss journalist Madelaine Brumagne's statement when Parra sang each tapestry in Vera's documentary *Viola Chilensis* (2003), speaks about the emotional effects of Parra's art and performance, and to which Kandinsky et al (1974, p. 190) refers: "the final goal (knowledge) is reached through delicate vibrations of the human soul. These delicate vibrations are ultimately identical, although their inner motions are different". This is briefly analysed by Dillon (2013, p. 231) who concludes: "Kandinsky's observation that different arts, sound, colour, word are different yet in their innermost core they are identical, is particularly relevant to Parra's art".

This is quite significant to Parra's case because she wanted to convey her cultural imagery through different media. This strongly indicates the feasibility of my hypothesis about Parra's agency in translating "a poetic and symbolic language" (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 1), or as I hope to demonstrate here, Parra's skill in expressing, re-presenting and translating a specific poetical idea into music, poetry and visual works. This is clearer when we think that Parra simultaneously created poetry, music and visual works within a six-year period, a short period of time in which she deliberately presented an interdisciplinary profile, as Brumagne explains in the documentary made for Swiss television:

Silently, in the universe of the workshop in Geneva, she reconstructs the life of instincts. This rebuilt life becomes art. A crude, magical art, always put in doubt by a grim will to break the loneliness. To exorcise misery, to give voice to the voice that vindicates, protests or exalts human love and brotherhood. Whether her hand makes arpilleras, writes poems, paints pictures, twists wires or strums the guitar, she always has the domain of emotions and the need for communicating immediately. (Parra, 2014k, track 3)



Figure 3, Violeta Parra, 1964, *Fiesta en la casa de Violeta*, oil on wood, 54 x 98.5 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 4, Violeta Parra, *Fiesta en casa de los Parra*, 87.5 x 124 cm, oil on canvas, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra.



Figure 5, Violeta Parra, *Niños en fiesta*, 1963 – 1965, papier-mâché on wood, 58.5 x 99 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 6, Violeta Parra, 1964 – 1965, *Los Parra*, oil on wood, 50 x 80 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to place Violeta Parra's interdisciplinary art in a lineage of artists who took artistic elements from one artform to another through an artistic translation in a distinctive and unique way. Yet, the authors and works from this long (mainly European) tradition, do not seem to be the direct practice from which Parra created her oeuvre because popular and rural Chilean art expressions did not create interdisciplinary works in the modern sense. Rather, the direct interdisciplinary link we may trace would have to be with the Spanish troubadour who was a singer, a poet, etc., derived from the relationship between text and music exemplified by Renaissance models which I shall explain in the third chapter. Nonetheless, the European interdisciplinary art tradition might certainly have influenced Parra because she could have seen – or learned – about it during her travels in Western Europe and to Soviet countries. This might be exemplified by Parra's letter penned in Geneva where she expresses sentiments quite similar to Kandinsky. Abroad, it seems that Parra realized the need to overcome the issue of not being understood by words and to seek a more immediate way of expressing and representing. In every European country in which Parra presented her work, she had to be translated into other languages in order to be understood. So, it seems that this language issue led her to think: why not directly “translate” an artwork into another art form instead of translating and explaining its meaning through another language? In practical terms, it seems to be the most logical and easy solution, but this answer was already part of her oral culture as the Decima III shows. In contrast, Kandinsky's musical paintings had successfully theorized and developed the interrelationship between painting and music within the context of the official - written culture.

We can certainly assume some extent of influence from European ideas of interdisciplinary art, since Parra's interdisciplinary works started after her first journey to Europe, as I shall explain in the second chapter. Yet, Parra contrasts with well-known interdisciplinary artists such as Wassily Kandinsky in Europe, and with Xul Solar in South America, because the latter examples represent and follow the European tradition which is linked to written Western culture. This is different to the context, tradition, and development of Parra's oeuvre which was more closely linked to oral culture; those unwritten, unofficial and non-institutionalized practices. Parra's interdisciplinary artwork thus would take some modern features but stay within and refer to oral culture. Nonetheless, Parra's artworks show some features from ekphrasis, and some features of the ‘convergence’ described by Adorno, as illustrated in her painting *Casamiento de negros*. But on the other hand, there does not seem to be any work in which Parra treats

colour and sound in the same ways as Kandinsky did when comparing musical notation to figurative painting; although there is a work whose title alludes to art music which might challenge that, as we shall see in the next chapter.

This chapter has also attempted to suggest a way in which to approach her interdisciplinary work from the notion of translation in art, understanding it as a poetical language whose elements can be translated from one artistic language to another. This entails understanding music, language and visual art as organized structures of communication. For example, Parra found, while researching Chilean rural songs, that songs were only one facet; there were a set of cultural elements which were expressed in different ways and which needed to be *poetically translated*. In these ways, by *translating poetics* allowed Parra to integrate, renovate, change, modernize and transform any given element in her own art. Thus, Parra's translation is a recreation whose poetics are "made of dusty stone, crushed lava, clay with blood." as posed by Neruda. For example, a single individual in rural Chile expressed cultural values through many forms; let us say in an interdisciplinary way, and at the same time, these differentiated elements may be unified, interconnected, interplayed, and converged to represent in an interdisciplinary way. Furthermore, Parra became aware that rural folk song had features such as being played by using modal and tonal musical systems which have their own well-differentiated features and organization, and at the same time have their own literary meters such as the *décima* and the *quatrain*. Therefore, Parra learned that these songs use two art forms whose languages are united in order to converge into an interdisciplinary artform. This is evident in her research for *Cantos Folkloricos Chilenos* in which she translated and discussed sound and textual forms. Thus, rural Chilean song forms such as the *Canto a lo Poeta* and the *cueca* were passed on orally and were meant to be understood aurally, so that the ear was the main medium for the tradition and wisdom which I shall explain in the fourth chapter. Later, in the urbanized areas of Chile, these literary meters were committed to paper in order to be read, as exemplified by the *Lira Popular*, as shall be explored in the second chapter.

On the other hand, the sense of sight, used as a communication system, seems to have a limited relationship to rural song that might have direct relevance when, for example, learning to play a musical instrument, or when engaging in the rituals of dance. More frequently, the sense of sight has been traditionally used in rural areas of Chile to express and preserve wisdom and knowledge through crafts, clothes, housing, and so forth, which at the same time have other types of inner structures and organization. Curiously, this knowledge, visually transmitted and preserved by crafts and understood by the sense of sight, was sometimes also carried out and developed by the same individuals who played songs. There were many people outside urbanized areas who

carried out many tasks in their daily lives, such as the woman who made clothes for her family, cooked, told stories and sang songs, among other things, as I shall explain in the second chapter. This is what evidence suggests as the foundation of Parra's interdisciplinary art: the rural individual – from pre-industrial society - who was able to practise multiple art forms such as music, crafts and poetry, but in a new and modern way in an industrialized society.

Therefore, it may be useful to think of language translation as an analogy of Parra's interdisciplinary oeuvre because music, poetry and art served her as languages in which to convey and transpose themes. In the same way as Parra had to learn and use the French language to communicate, she also had to learn these artistic systems of language and in doing so, added her own characteristic ways of singing, of guitar-playing, of writing, of stitch-knitting, to "weave the narration". Each system language has its own world, full of unique possibilities for expression, speech and signification. The complexity of translation is evident in the challenge of translating Parra's oeuvre from Spanish into English, because it is not enough to simply find the literal equivalent word in the other language; the equivalent word or phrase has to be found in the other language that expresses that word the most exactly.

Also, many of these concepts, theories, categories, and so forth, are considered a type of translation through a different interpretant to the original source. However, this is not the case with Parra's work because the transference of a poetical language from one medium into another was not made by another 'interpretant' but by the author herself. Therefore, how to begin to define Parra's procedure of 'translation'? We might start by recognizing the difficulties of truly understanding an author's creative process of translation because there are many elements constraining and shaping it. We can thus define Parra's 'poetics' as an abstract and general structure whose main feature is its capability to translate, represent, reflect, and convey, thus inherently related to the other representative art forms such as poetry, music, painting and so forth. Parra's poetics is thus closely related to the practice of translation. As we have seen, translation occurs when ideas, themes, concepts, and so forth, must be changed, or transformed or re-elaborated, in order to be understood, recurring in other elements for meanings. From the linguistic perspective, let us say, of a poetical translation, Jakobson's concept of 'Intersemiotic translation (or transmutation)' seems to best describe Parra's interdisciplinary artwork since a poetical translation between two or more different media is only possible by a 'creative transposition' from a verbal system to another nonverbal system. Thus, Parra's poetic translation from one art form to another may be understood as an intersemiotic process of interpretation to transpose a song into a painting.

This “creative translation” is thus closely related to Parra’s use of the word ‘transpose’ as evidence of a deliberated will for translating poetics mainly because of three reasons. Firstly, Parra clearly used the Spanish word ‘transportar’, whose closer translation into English is ‘transpose’, meaning to change something from one position to another in both English and Spanish.³¹ Secondly, because Parra deliberately used it as an interdisciplinary metaphor, concept, or idea, to represent, convey and signify a musical practice known as ‘guitarra traspuesta’ [transposed guitar] which I shall explain in Chapter Four. Thirdly, because Nicanor Parra, probably the most influential figure in Violeta’s life, uses the idea of a musical transcriber as the best way of exemplifying his interdisciplinary work as a translator of a play which contains multiple elements that must be translated in order to be understood in a different language, in the same way as Eco expressed later in his book *Mouse or Rat...* However, Nicanor conceived this idea in an interdisciplinary way because Eco constrained the musical transcription to an intralingual translation – a language reformulation - whereas Nicanor’s translation idea is closer to Jakobson’s intersemiotic transposition which translates into other art forms by means of ‘creative transposition’.

Similarly, we can apply or ‘transpose’ this idea to Parra’s poetical translation when something belonging to one place is creatively transposed to another. This creative translation might also be understood as the rebuilding of life that becomes art, to quote Brumagne (Parra, 2014k, track 3). That is, there is a motif, namely a poetics, which needs to be narrated and understood in a different art form, by considering the differences and similarities between them, and meaning that there might be ‘new elements’ that may contribute to the success of the translated piece. These new elements may or not change the original message, but in doing so it takes new features from the new art form thus it is not a repetition since the ‘travel’ has changed, not the ‘traveller’. Thus, Parra’s poetics have the capacity of expressing abstract and general structures in different art forms through an interdisciplinary creative transposition.

Accordingly, I use the word interdisciplinary instead of multidisciplinary because the latter mainly denotes ‘many’ arts being involved but not necessarily connecting as a whole; there can be little or no interrelation. Parra has traditionally been regarded as a multidisciplinary or multi-faceted artist who created in many arts, which is very true, but that term does not seem to describe the sense of Parra’s interrelated oeuvre because her poetics are translated across her oeuvre into music, poetry and visual art. The word

³¹ The Cambridge dictionary defines the word ‘transpose’ in terms of music: “to play or write a piece of music in a different key (set of musical notes based on a particular note) from the one used originally”, and typifies the word’s usage thus: “In their latest production they have reworked “King Lear”, transposing it to pre-colonial Africa.”(Cambridge, 2017)

interdisciplinary, on the other hand, which means 'between', thus denotes and suggests connections, influences, and links between those different art forms working together to reciprocally interact as a coherent whole and referring to each other; they are interrelated.³² For example, Parra's painting *Casamiento de negros* exemplifies how music-text organization influenced its figurative structure. Consequently, the term interdisciplinary seems to be the most suitable to describe Parra's oeuvre. We shall see next how this interdisciplinary oeuvre was going to be fruitful but in different ways to the Western European art tradition, as mentioned before.

³² Although these words may seem to refer to similar things, I make the distinction drawn from science terminology (Mitchell, 2005; Fawcett, 2013)

Chapter II

All the songs may be painted: Approaching Parra's poetics of translation

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

William Blake
'Auguries of Innocence'

Parra's Interdisciplinary Activity

Having approached and established the differences and similarities of Violeta Parra's interdisciplinarity within the long history of authors who translated poetic elements into another artform, we can move on to analyse the very nature of her interdisciplinary oeuvre. Accordingly, we shall see what she translated and how, by providing useful biographical context. Specifically, I shall trace Parra's intense translating activity, which started with music and poetry, and achieved its pinnacle in Europe when she translated her own poetics from poetry and music into her own visual language. Parra's intense final years show a quite different artist to the folk singer who won the Caupolican award in 1954 in Chile. By 1967, Parra was not just a singer of Chilean folk; she had recorded the very famous *Las Últimas Composiciones de Violeta Parra* using a relatively unknown Andean ten-stringed instrument, the charango. Interestingly, she had also established a multi-purpose site where she could live, perform, exhibit, and teach her own artwork, Chilean oral tradition and other South American art more generally. All these 'new' artistic features were a sign of Parra's interdisciplinary purpose and have not been sufficiently explored. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Parra had connected herself to an ancient idea of the relationship between art forms that sought to display a holistic notion of Chilean oral culture. Although we cannot directly link Parra's interdisciplinary art to the earlier developments reviewed in the previous chapter, can we trace the development of the idea of artistic transference from one art to another in Parra's poetical language? Where does this interdisciplinary activity come from? Let us begin with those events that revealed Parra as an interdisciplinary artist.

While researching rural songs, Parra found that there was a popular type of musical folk form called 'cueca'; a less than two-minute form of song danced to by couples – of which more detail in the fourth chapter - whose performance and tradition gave her a significant insight into the ways in which music, poetry, visual art and dance may intertwine and reflect each other. In fact, writing a song requires syncing the rhythmic metres of sound and text, which may be seen as a weaving of sounds and words, but also, and more importantly, as a foundational concept underpinning Parra's poetics of translations:

I can account for four types of cueca. In Quirigua, while talking to Filomena Yévenes and Celia Yévenes, **weavers and peasant singers**,³³ I learned that in Chilean parties these four different types of Chilean cueca are sung [...] Mrs. Celia says that the cueca of the balance is danced when no one decides to start the

³³ Bold words added by me.

party. The singer then takes the initiative, and says, "I'm going to sing the balance-cueca." In doing so, the singer makes a true mapping of each people that is there, and after the third part of the song, he begins to name each one of the guests. Name a man first, then name a woman and everyone goes out dancing, out of obligation, want or do not want to. And so **the dance is a beautiful weave of people** who get up, while at the same time others start dancing, and others sit ... (Parra, 2014j, track 1)

This description [track 2] offered by Parra in which people dancing cueca seem to follow the pattern of a weave is quite revealing regarding her own notion of translation, as well as the way different arts connect and converge. For some it might recall Henri Matisse's *La Danse* [Appendix 13], while for others it may reveal the essence and the very foundations of Parra's arpillera *La Cueca* [Figure 7]. It is very clear that in this artwork Parra poetically translated that image into a visual scene in which characters look like they are setting up a weave. It must be stressed that this interdisciplinary idea comes from Parra's research on singers who, among other things, were weavers too; a type of 'interdisciplinary countryside-women'. This explicitness and reflexion of how some Chilean rural people actually saw interconnected patterns when dancing their songs, is part of other types of literal references and suggestions of their interdisciplinary profile, task and work, such as the cueca 'Tengo que hacer un Retrato' [track 3] [I've got to make a portrait], where the need to paint humble and ungrateful eyes is sung.

Certain biographical factors might be the primary foundations of Parra's use of different media. For example, Parra's mother, Clarisa Sandoval was an illiterate peasant woman who enjoyed singing folk songs while working on her sewing machine (Vicuña, 1958, p. 72). Parra (1998, p.53) poetically described her mother: "Fortunately, intelligence is the best partner of my mother, making a thousand things with the sewing, her science, her fine curtsey". When interviewed in Switzerland, Parra declared that her mother was the true artist because she was a seamstress who had to made up dresses from pieces of cloth like the one she was wearing because it was the only way to have an income and sustain her nine children (Parra, 1998, pp. 53-54). On the other hand, her father, Nicanor Parra Alarcón was a skilled teacher of music who played guitar, violin, piano, mandolin, and had prestige as a folk singer (Parra, 2011, p. 33). After the death of her father, the teenage Parra and her siblings had to find a means for obtaining money because of their harsh social and economic conditions,³⁴ and had to sing in public spaces such as train stations, markets and street fairs, mainly with her siblings (Hilda, Roberto and Eduardo).

³⁴ Parra narrates her father's difficult times in *décimas* XIV and XV from her autobiography.



Figure 7, Violeta Parra, 1962, *La Cueva*, lino and wool embroidery, 119.5 x 94.5 cm Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 8, Violeta Parra, 1961, *El circo*, synthetic fabric embroidered with wool, 122 x 211 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

However, they found money, food and some protection in 'Tolin', a circus that travelled through different towns and villages, and they became part of it because "it meant a way to survive by banding together to entertain" (Kerschen, 2010, p. 27). Thus, Parra learned from people who played different roles and acquired different skills. One day they would have to perform as acrobats, then as jugglers, or as a magician and clown, or as a dancer and musician, and so forth. Later, in 1952, Parra repeated her youthful experience and joined circuses with her children; the interdisciplinary profile re-emerged. Not only did they sing, they also cooked, sold their wares, and did everything that was necessary. The arpillera *El Circo* [Figure 8] certainly conveys these experiences. For some critics, Parra translated her memories by using a visual language similar to surrealism – a style which she may have learned from Chile's foremost surrealist artist Roberto Matta (Parra, 2011, p. 182) – while for others, she was developing and polishing her own poetical language by mixing the language of the everyday with surrealism:

A dog walks on two legs, a goose dances and a snail stitches a purple face. A supine woman balances a head on her feet; faces emerge from a guitar played by an anthropomorphic musician and a goose leaps over the scene. This description is of *El circo* (1962), undoubtedly one of Parra's most surrealist embroideries. The dream like appearance of *El circo* places it alongside some of the most fantastic images in Latin American art. (Dillon, 2013, p. 190)

According to Sáez (2017 p. 57), in 1952, Parra formed, along with her second husband Luis Arce and sister Hilda, a variety company called 'Estampas de América', for which Parra painted the scenery, created the sketches, and administrated the show. This spectacle encompassed singers, humourists, dancers and even a magician, and in having to perform different roles, was certainly similar to her circus days so that it can be interpreted as an apprenticeship for her development as an interdisciplinary artist.

The next step, and probably the most significant reference to her interdisciplinary profile, is her research of the oral traditions of rural areas of Chile which, however, was first published in France under the title *Poésie Populaire des Andes* (Parra, 1965). Parra's *Cantos Folkloricos Chilenos* (Parra, 2013) [Chilean Folk Songs], first published in 1979, collected and reconstructed from six men and nine women, including her mother Clarisa, ninety-nine texts of folk rhythms such as cuecas, tonadas, refalosas, chapecao, pequén, esquinaldo, parabienes, from different Chilean cities such as Lautaro, Curacaví, Ñuble, Maule province, Chillán, San Bernardo, Barrancas (now Pudahuel), Pirque, Las Vizcachas, and Alto Jahuel. Parra's research approach was described different to the canon because "she is not a stranger among the old peasant singers [she recorded and interviewed]. She does not come to the village with the spirit of a scholar who looks for

the interesting [ethnographic matter], but as the older sister of the popular singers.” (Vicuña, 1958, p. 71). The musicologist Gastón Soublette (1927), who transcribed to a score Parra’s tunes for her research, stresses Parra’s work in reconstructing a collected text: “given the age of most folk songs and the gradual loss of popular traditions for the development of urban life, many melodies and many texts are incomplete, or what is more frequent, mixed with fragments of other songs” (Parra, 1959b). Still, Parra transcribed more than texts and melodies, she poetically translated “the customs, the sayings of everyday dialogue, lifestyle and housing constructions, furniture, clothing, crafts, culinary recipes, narrations, legends, festivals, verses to the divine and human, judgments of wisdom for a good living and for a good death” (Parra, 2013, p. 10).³⁵

According to literary scholar Catherine Boyle (2009, p. 80), Parra was strongly influenced by Chilean female figures, those women who were traditionally the backbone of fatherless families. Parra’s own mother and Doña Rosa Lorca were inspirational figures to her; they embodied the experience of everyday rituals (Parra, 2006, p. 76). In fact, Parra regarded her mother as a source of knowledge, poetically describing her as “my mother of much science” (Parra, 1998, p. 47). For example, when Parra debuted on the radio show *Aún tenemos la música chilena!* [we still have Chilean music], she was introduced as “a singer-songwriter who has travelled through cities and puddles, beaches, deserts, mountains and plains to bring us the authentic peasant woman” (Kerschen, 2010, p. 72). Boyle (2009, p. 81) claims that Parra “will repeatedly insist on the creative power needed in domestic survival as a model for her artistic endeavour,” so Parra is perceived as a “complete Chilean popular woman”. Furthermore, Boyle (Ibid., p. 84) examined Parra’s literary qualities in her *Décimas* and ‘Gracias a la vida’, concluding that Parra “runs the thread of oral consciousness and memory” in the same way as her brother Nicanor, through the use and subject of a “popular shared language”.

Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn (1992, p. 126), describe this similarly: “she looks innocent, as if painting, drawing and embroidery were integral processes of everyday life, in which ordinary things acquire forms and nuances associated with the extraordinary and the magical”. Film-maker Sergio Castilla (1942) released *Mijita* in 1970, a documentary film that shows ordinary Chilean women speaking out about their lives, thoughts, and what it means for them to be a woman in Chile during the first part

³⁵ Soublette (Parra, 2013, p. 11) continues: “Because the culture of a people is not a set of objects and texts produced by anonymous people, nor is culture made only through actions, events, and cultural policies. The culture of a people is first of all the way in which their life develops according to traditional customs and practices, from the acts of daily life, to celebrations dressed in solemnity; from the way in which their faith is expressed to the narrative and advice in which mature people remember the wisdom of the ancestors to offer examples of sensible and virtuous behavior”.

of the twentieth century. Interestingly, Castilla used Parra's songs throughout the film perhaps as an emblem of this "Chilean popular woman" who had to carry out multiple tasks as a mother and as a wife in Chilean patriarchal society.

Another significant event, from an interdisciplinary perspective, took place in 1954 when Parra started promoting her investigations of traditional practices. Parra was given the opportunity to do a radio show titled 'Así Canta Violeta Parra' on the new Radio Chilena, whose scripts were written by the presenter Ricardo García by using Parra's information in their weekly documentary programs. García, who was later prominent in promoting the Chilean New Song artists and running the Alerce record label (Shepherd et al., 2003, p. 683), states that "each program was about a story of a folkloric event, such as 'El Mingaco'; a festive event in southern Chile" (I. Parra, 2011, pp. 58-63) where inhabitants get together to collaborate in a particular task:

She collected the necessary information, adapting the info so that I could make the script and determine what would be the recordings that we would need to translate: the goal was to describe the cultural event with the participation of people, of real life. We were in the place where the folkloric event took place, with the peasant idioms. [In order to be broadcast on the radio] All this had to be created or made up a little, to elaborate a guideline. With that guideline, we went to a town or the countryside, or we worked with the neighbors of Larrain [an urban area] that at that time was a neighborhood away from Santiago. We gathered people in the street, the children began to shout the things we asked them to do. A spontaneous theater arose, and the 'taste of the living thing' [the authentic folk essence, or the authentic lifestyle] was collected in this way, with dog barks, noises of the environment, of an area on the outskirts of the city. This was how the program worked, and in the middle of all that description, the songs were inserted. [...] we were not working with what was considered as popular music. (I. Parra, 2011, pp. 60-61)

Unfortunately, no recordings of these programmes are available, but we might gain a rough notion by listening to Parra's exposition at the 'Aula Magna de la Universidad de Concepción' (Parra, 2014b, track 3) where she explains, recites and sings what she has researched. Unlike this recorded presentation for an audience that could understand through the sense of sight, Parra had to translate these cultural events into audible forms where auditors had only the sense of hearing with which to understand the event. This calls our attention to the parallels with the 'Radio Ballads' produced by Ewan MacColl and Charles Parker between 1958 and 1964 for the BBC. "Broadcast on 2 July 1958, The Ballad of John Axon was to be the first in a series of eight features broadcast over the next six years which were to become legendary" (Street, 2002, p. 98-99), the Radio Ballads are often referenced as an important innovation, "devised [as] a narratorless

montage of location recording" (Ibid.).³⁶ Still, Parra's ability to translate and convey the daily life of an authentic cultural event was beyond mere performance. García also describes how they could record an authentic source:³⁷

There we had to solve all the problems that the recordings brought us. On one occasion, we had to record a program dedicated to the peasant wake. We had to resort to several people, popular poets, but we also needed other elements: for example, the bell playing in the funeral way. We did not know what to do so that the parish priest of Larraín would play the bell in the 'funereal' way. We went to talk to him. She [Parra] explained what it was, and requested him to ring the bell. The priest hesitated, looked at her [to Parra] and said, "Do you know what we can do? Wait for a little, because in the next door there is a neighbor who is very sick." Sure enough, an hour later the bell began to ring. (I. Parra, 2011, p. 63)

Another good reference for understanding this record of different authentic sounds, noise, or ambient sound is the song 'La misa del gallo' - midnight mass - [track 4] which starts with the noise of animals.



Figure 9, *La cueca presentada por Violeta Parra* (1959) LP-cover illustrated by Julio Escámez; and *La tonada presentada por Violeta Parra*, 1959, LP-cover illustrated by Nemesio Antúnez.

³⁶ Interestingly, García (Osorio-Cubillos, 1996, p. 11) claims that one of the most significant moment of his life was the day when he refused a scholarship to join the BBC in London in 1956: "If I had left, I would surely have stayed there, and my career would have taken a very different direction". It seems that Parra and García's work preceded MacColl and Parker, but this goes beyond my purpose here.

³⁷ García (I. Parra, 2011, p.63) adds: "To record the sound effects and the dialogues that were proposed, the important thing was the following: the contact that Violeta had with the people. She was very special, she achieved impossible things, like getting the neighbors out of their houses so they could do a little theater, this is easy to do with children, but older people added to her request, without ever having seen her before. She had a power of conviction, an attraction so special that I could not believe it."



Figure 10, Violeta Parra sewing at an open-air art fair organized by The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago de Chile.



Figure 11, Violeta Parra working on clay at an open-air art fair organized by The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago de Chile.

In 1958, Parra was hired by the University of Concepción, southern Chile, to create the 'National Museum of Chilean Folk Art' in which she would put pictures, instruments, books, crafts, and other traditional elements. In doing so she became increasingly aware that traditional oral culture encompassed many elements of expression. That period was significant because she got involved in many activities organized by the university that meant she met intellectuals and artists such as poet Gonzalo Rojas (1916-2011), and painters Julio Escámez and Nemesio Antúnez (1918-1993) who created the covers for Parra's albums *La Cueca...* and *Tonadas*, respectively [Figure 9]. In fact, Parra arrived at the University of Concepción as part of a series of initiatives by the rector David Stitchkin (1956-1962) that sought to raise the social profile of the university, with great stress on the university's role in the fields of art, specifically theater, cinema, literature, and the plastic arts, as well as indigenous traditional culture (Sáez, 2017 pp. 113-116). In 1959, Parra went to Chiloé, a set of islands in southern Chile, to research local culture and to teach folk song, painting and ceramics, and at the end of that year she exhibited at an open-air art fair in the Parque Forestal organized by the Santiago Museum of Modern Art in the Chilean capital, in which besides exhibiting her visual crafts, she sang, played music for solo guitar, created figures in clay, and cooked typical Chilean food (Parra, 2011, p. 227) [Figures 10,11]. She also exhibited there the following year.

The Chilean television pioneer, Raúl Aicardi (1924-2013), the Radio Chilena head who had led Parra to radio and later became head of the new University of Chile television, gave the Parra family's some sporadic jobs on the new television channel number 9, and received Parra's experimental proposal for doing something similar to her collaboration with Garcia for the radio, but now through a new means of communication that offered many unexplored possibilities from Parra's perspective. In a letter dated 1961 from Buenos Aires, Argentina, Parra clearly stated that she could paint her songs, referring to her song 'Casamiento de Negros':

I offer you a permanent programme of five minutes. Drawings which illustrate a song, with the song as the background music. Now, I have the 'Casamiento de negros' ready with a painting which is based on two smaller paints. To make it easier, the song can be recorded and sung by [my daughter] Chabelita. You send me all the materials and I don't charge for doing it. All the songs may be painted. [...]Come and see the Casamiento de negros in drawing. (Parra, 2011, p. 117)

Furthermore, in the early years of Chilean television, Parra also got involved in TV programmes [Figure 12] disseminating Chilean oral customs, because they offered the visual possibilities that radio lacked, proposing "to do audiovisual works for free - long before there was talk of video-clips" (Montealegre, 2011, p. 28). Unfortunately,

Parra's work in Chilean television did not continue – and the reasons remain unanswered - but the interdisciplinary idea would fare better in her stay in Argentina in 1961. There, she lived for six months and carried out concerts, courses, exhibitions, TV programmes, befriending artists such as Horacio Guaraní (1925-2017) and other intellectuals (Parra, 2011, p. 123). In Argentina, she published the album *El Folklore de Chile Según Violeta Parra* [Figure 13], a compilation album with some new popular songs she had collected, such as 'A la Una Nací Yo' and 'Vengo toda Avergonzada', whose cover she created. Still, this album cover whose original painting remains without location and untitled, depicting a colourful painted woman singing and playing the guitar, reveals a significant interdisciplinary feature that was not an isolated case. The oil painting technique used by Parra bears a close resemblance to the embroidering technique of her arpilleras, as if she was trying to poetically translate the arpillera technique into this oil painting. For example, the geometrical shapes of the woman's face and hair are similar to the body of the arpillera *Hombre con guitarra* [Figure 14], as is the systematic use of dots for painting the hand, and to a lesser extent some parts of the neck and chest. In other letters from the Argentinian capital, Parra explained her multimedia idea for three concerts in a seven-hundred seat theatre where she could hang some visual works such as paintings and arpilleras, and project Bravo's *Mimbre* with her music, with colour slides showing her visual art as the anticuecas playing in the background (Parra, 2011, pp. 127-129)



Figure 12, Violeta Parra at 'canal 9 de la Universidad de Chile', a tv show from the University of Chile, no date, Violeta Parra Foundation.



Figure 13, *El folklore de Chile según Violeta Parra*, 1962, recorded and published in Argentina, cover by V. Parra, an oil on canvas, no date, and currently lost.

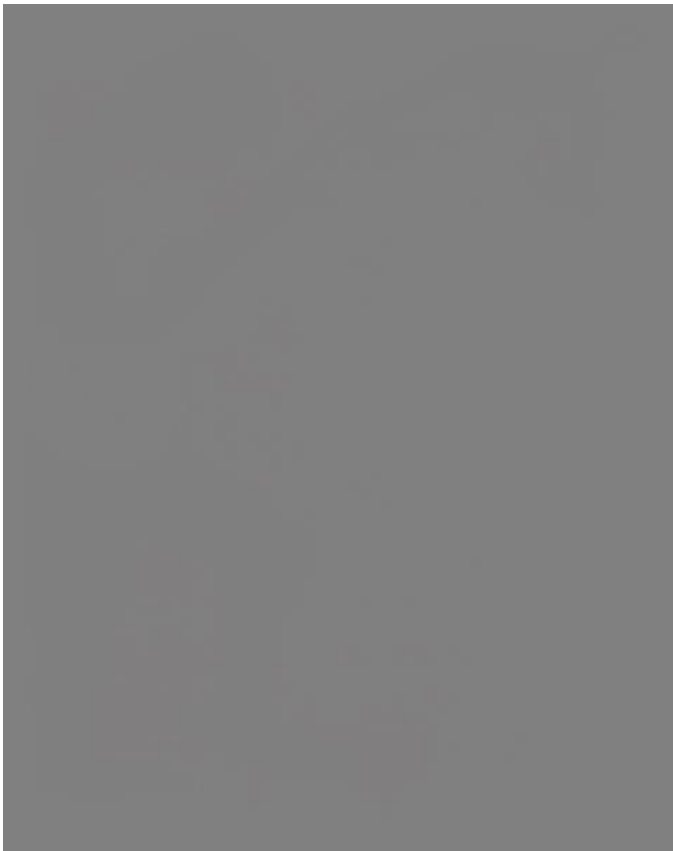


Figure 14, Violeta Parra, 1960, *Hombre con Guitarra*, jute embroidered with wool, 134 x 89 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 15, Violeta Parra, 1999, *Violeta Parra en vivo en Ginebra*, CD, cover.



Figure 16, Parra singing with her daughter Carmen Luisa in Geneva, 1963, Fundación Violeta Parra colección.

From Argentina, she travelled to Finland, the USSR, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and France, where finally Parra established a place to temporarily live and work in Paris. She also travelled constantly to Geneva where her partner Gilbert Favre (1936-1998) lived, and did recitals [Figures 15 and 16], TV presentations, and had exhibitions in such prestigious venues as UNESCO and the Sorbonne (Kerschen, 2010, p. 173; Parra, 2011, p. 228). Favré, a Swiss national, met Parra in Chile for Parra's birthday in 1960 having given up an anthropological expedition in the Atacama Desert. In his quest for Chilean folklore, Favre was advised to meet Violeta Parra, who taught him to play the quena, and soon they started a romantic relationship in which they shared their lives as well as their work (A. Parra, 2006, p.19; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976. p. 97). It is interesting to note that these pictures [Figures 15 and 16] epitomise the centrality of music and visual arts to Parra's interdisciplinary performance. During 1962 and 1963 Parra intensified her interdisciplinary activity, this time with more impact, because she was already known to people and institutions in Europe, which meant she would have new, and more significant, opportunities than during her first stay. For example, in January 1964, Parra was invited to participate in a spectacle called *Vivre* [living] whose music was composed by Jean Wiener, in which she sang and exhibited her visual art [Figure 17]. The French actress and producer Eve Grillicquez was impressed by Parra's singing, and specially by her musicalization of a Pablo Neruda text, and brought this spectacle to the Plaisance theatre, but Grillicquez also knew about Parra's idea of making a recording combining music with Latin American poems (Parra, 2011, p. 187).

Also, Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 184) wrote, "Here in Paris, extraordinary things have happened in regard to my work"; she had found artistic recognition, but more importantly, she was being recognised as an interdisciplinary artist. For her exhibition at the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Palais du Louvre that took place from April 8 to May 11, 1964 [Figure 18], she was officially presented as follows:

Violeta is hardly unknown in France, fans of folk music know her recordings of Chilean songs, collected during her travels of villages and countryside, the mountains and shores of her country. They know too that she enriched contemporary folklore, creating songs and poems in her own voice authentically Chilean yet profoundly personal.

For the first time in Paris, she presents another aspect of her talent, with a very original group of arpilleras, paintings and sculpture. (Brunhammer, 1964, p.2)³⁸

³⁸ Translated by Karen Kerschen (2010, pp. 157-158).



Figure 17, Vivre advertisement where Parra sang and exhibited her visual arts at the Théâtre de Plaisance Paris.



Figure 18, Violeta Parra, 1964, *Afiche*, 98 x 66.5 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

After the Louvre exhibition, Parra travelled to Geneva, Switzerland, to live temporarily along with her partner Gilbert where she continued working on art crafts. There she was interviewed by Swiss television in 1965 originally titled 'Violeta Parra de Chile' (Parra, 2014k, track 3) [track 5], and presented as the famous and exotic Latin American artist who had exhibited at the Louvre. This has since become an invaluable treasure as some of the only footage we currently have of her. Brumagne, the interviewer, arrived at Parra's studio and filmed her working, singing, dancing, but more importantly catching some of her interdisciplinary thought. The 18:49-minute film starts with the song 'Qué he sacado con quererte' (Parra, 2014c, track 3) while the camera shows walls filled with paintings, arpilleras and instruments such as guitars, the Chilean guitarrón, a charango, flutes, and drums, to end up with a close-up on Parra singing the song and playing the Venezuelan four-stringed instrument, the cuatro, and a drum with her finger, dressed in a woollen poncho. Then it shows Parra making a mask from pieces of cardboard, explaining in French how she created it by keeping in mind an individual poetical image that had touched her. Accordingly, Brumagne asked Parra, "I would like to know what are the subjects you deal with in your arpilleras, so different from your paintings?" and Parra responded, "I try to show Chilean popular life, its legends and songs". Next, Parra explained three arpilleras that show her activist art and one in which she tried to narrate a part of Chilean history; *Contra la guerra* [Figure 26] (against war), *La révolte des paysans* [Figure 53]³⁹ (the peasant's revolt), and what seems to be *Fresia y Caupolicán* [Figure 30]

Yet one of the most famous scenes from this documentary is when Parra is challenged to think in just one art form to express her art as "a poet, musician, embroiderer of arpilleras, painter". The interviewer says, "If you had to choose one of these means of expression which would you choose?", to which Parra responds as she paints, "I would choose to stay with people. It is they who drive me to do all these things". In the last scene, Parra appears alone, dancing a cueca in the same room full of visual works and musical instruments. In the documentary *Viola Chilensis*, Brumagne (Vera, 2005, mnts 00:11:05) declares that when she met Parra [track 6], the long-black-haired woman was embroidering an arpillera hanging on a wall of a gallery in Lausanne (Parra, 2011, p. 184), and claimed her admiration for those arpilleras, Parra replied, "So if you really like them I will sing all my arpilleras for you", and then she took the guitar, says Brumagne, and she began to sing all the songs related to the arpilleras in front of each one, which moved her to tears. Kerschen (2010, pp. 179-181) claims that Parra sang 'La

³⁹ However, the title written in the Louvre exhibition catalogue was *La greve des paysans* (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 9)

Jardinera' (Parra, 1956) in front of the arpillera called *La petite sorcière* [Figure 19] (the little witch) for Brumagne, which makes sense because it is the same arpillera that appears behind Brumagne while she speaks in the documentary. In her book *Mentira Todo lo Cierto*, Carmen Oviedo (1990, p. 93) asserts that Parra wanted to travel across Europe in her own car to film her concerts and exhibitions in order to create a visual documentary. Parts of these films appeared in the DVD *Violeta Parra Bordadora Chilena* under the titled 'Primera exposición de Violeta en el Museo del Louvre' (Parra, 2014k, track 2), without sound. This DVD also contains three other videos in black and white, mostly showing Parra performing in Paris, Santiago and Geneva, and the second Parra exhibition at the Louvre in 1997.



Figure 19, Violeta Parra, no date. Parra playing the guitar next to the arpillera *La petite sorcière*, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 20, Advertisement of the Parra family's 'Chilean ensemble' in Geneva, Switzerland.

In Switzerland, Parra found many people interested in her work; she could sell arpilleras, paintings, masks, sculptures, for good prices, but also managed to develop her interdisciplinary ideas. In 1964 Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 183) declared in a letter: "I have lived in Geneva for six months, where I have been able to carry out my work as a popular singer, as a painter and upholsterer, and as a South American folklorist". As mentioned, this second stay seems to be her best professional times as her interdisciplinary activities show it, for example, giving concerts at the university of Laussane and Geneva where Parra and her children sang and sold Chilean food and drinks, offering concerts-exhibitions in home of the Swiss aristocracy, collaborating with museums, interviews, etc (Kerschen, 2010, pp. 179-191; Oviedo, 1990, p. 94; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 97). The interdisciplinary performance given as 'the Chilean ensemble Violeta Parra' [Figure 20] is a good example of what Parra did in many places, even at the Louvre exhibition, where she turned the scene into a veritable *ramada* in order to display the context in which these artistic customs are intertwined with food, drink, dancing, etc. (Parra, 2011, p.148). Proof of this is in the posthumous recording known as *Violeta Parra en vivo en Ginebra* (Parra, 2014c) which features an interview in French, and a live presentation at the home of a friend - Madame Raymonde

Gampert (Parra, 2011, p. 201; Kerschen, 2010) - performed with Favre, and where Parra danced, taught and explained about the music and the instruments displayed. This record demonstrates an interactive approach by Parra, highlighting her particular interest in translating Chilean oral culture through songs, dances and visual works. Similarly, the record cover picture shows Parra in Geneva playing the guitar in front of the same arpillera entitled *Les Marchands de Cacahuètes* [Figure 25] that she appeared with in the picture from the art fair in Parque Forestal Chile in 1960.

In June, 1965, Parra headed back to Santiago de Chile where her children Isabel and Angel had been running a project called 'La Peña de los Parra' since the previous year, in which singer-songwriters such as Víctor Jara (1932-1973) and Patricio Manns (1937) developed the Chilean New Song style by combining strong political and social messages with folk rhythms. Isabel and Angel Parra had experience of singing in bars and miscellaneous venues in Europe, as their mother did, but it was in Paris where they had found more work in traditional Spanish taverns known as *peñas*, from which they took the name. Although Parra was having success in Geneva and Paris, she felt she had to go to Chile: "Isabel asked me for help because things were not going well in Chile" (Parra, 2011, p. 194). In a way, Parra went to Chile to revive the 'Peña de los Parra' as it was losing popularity, and Parra's success in Europe as an interdisciplinary artist could engage a broader audience with more than the songs with social messages that were characteristic of Chilean New Song. Parra made herself at home and as soon as she arrived she performed and made food, and started teaching the oral Chilean folk to the young singers who performed there, exhibiting her visual art, and even painting some wall murals [Figure 21].

In mid-1965, Parra's children provisionally moved La Peña to the annual National Society of Agriculture Fair, an important event where thousands of people usually attended. Parra also received a proposal from her friend Sergio Larrain and his partner to set up her own Peña there too where they could sell refreshments, food, and the likes, in order to take advantage of Parra's popularity. However, Parra's Peña business failed, breaking her friendship with her business partners, leaving her to run the business alone, saddled with the huge tent and the associated debts of its cost. In that context, it seems that Parra was looking for a more rural living style in setting up her own cultural centre for popular art that she named Carpa de la Reina [La Reina's tent], an interdisciplinary space where singers could perform, and she could teach the customs she investigated and artistically translated. It was felt that the neofolklore performed in La Peña de los Parra was becoming too much of a fashion trend, and making Chilean folk too stylized (Parra, 2011, p. 209; Kerschen, 2010, p. 216). Suddenly, Parra obtained the concession

of a parcel of land in Parque La Quintrala, located in a distant neighbourhood of Santiago, in the Andes foothills, without public transportation, in which to move the tent, which measured over one hundred feet in diameter. However, everybody disagreed with this because they thought it “was impossible to attract customers there” while Parra hoped “to accomplish much the same thing as La Peña in my own way. I will show my paintings, tapestries, ceramics, sing my songs. Newcomers just starting out will have a stage. In this sense, La Peña is insufficient; that’s why I’m raising my tent” (Kerschen, 2010, p. 207). The name Carpa de la Reina refers to the name of the neighbourhood in which this centre was settled and inaugurated in December 1965, La Reina, where her partner Gilbert built a one-room adobe hut where Parra and fifteen-year-old daughter Carmen Luisa could live. It was like living in the countryside, in Parra’s place of birth San Carlos, with its precarious living conditions, and similar to the circuses in which Parra sang as a child.



Figure 21, Violeta Parra, no date, wall-paintings at the Peña de los Parra, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection

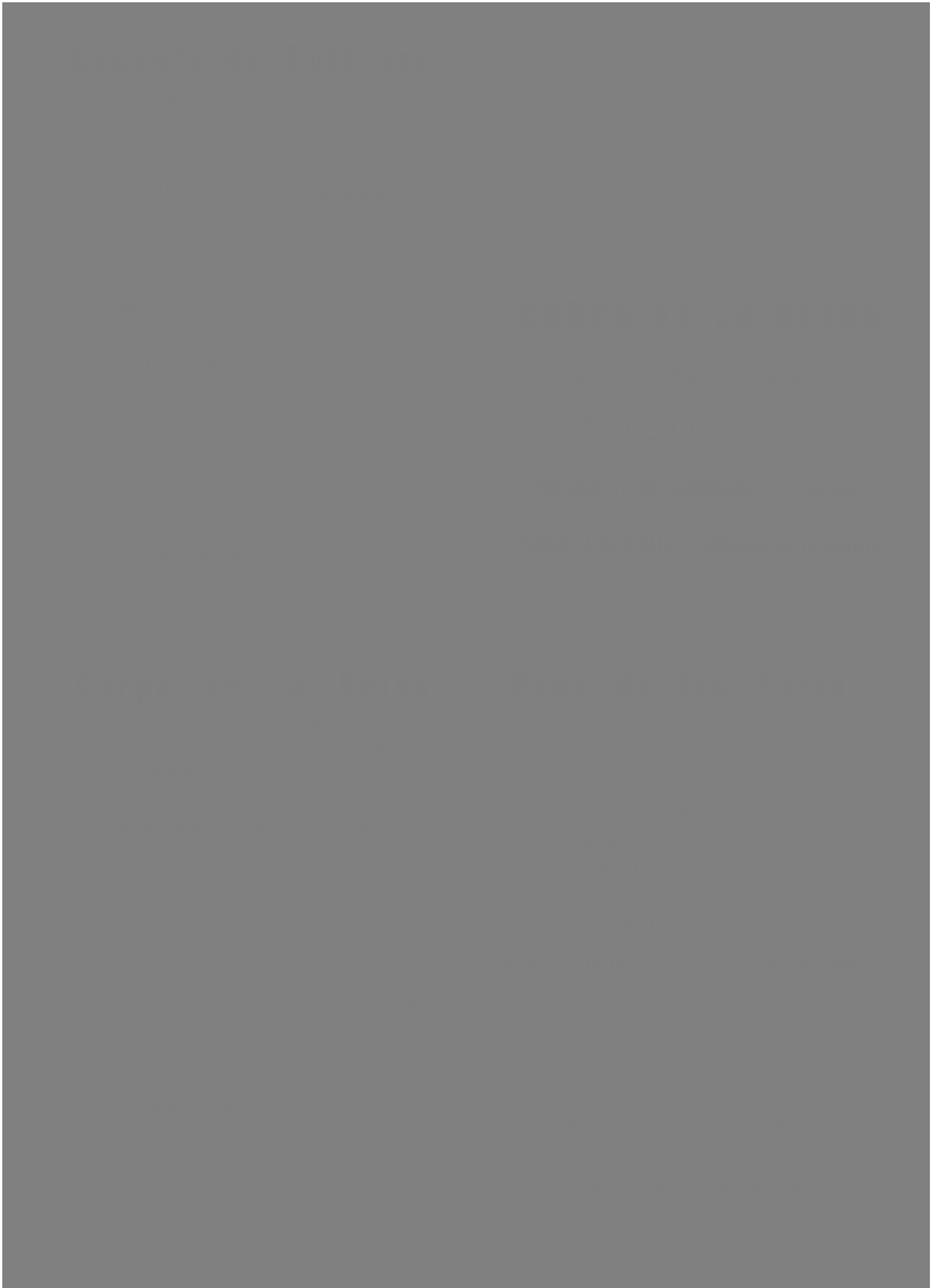


Figure 22, Violeta Parra, 'La Carpa de la Reina' flyer, 1965.

Thus, Parra sought to establish a permanent place to integrate music, popular poetry and plastic arts to somehow crystallize her interdisciplinary idea of art as the cultural expression of rural areas of Chile. As the publicity flyer says, Parra's interdisciplinary space was not a self-promotion space for Parra's monopoly of Chilean customs; the most important folklorist of the time Margot Loyola (1918-2015),⁴⁰ artists, dancers and singers such as the folk researcher Raquel Barros (1919-2014), Loyola's disciples Gabriela Pizarro (1932-1999), Silvia Urbina (1928-2016) and Rolando Alarcón (1929-1973), among others, were teaching at the Folk School – whose subtitle was “for spreading national folklore and art” [Figure 22]. Yet Parra's artistic vision and this project were unpopular in comparison to the reception she enjoyed in Switzerland and Paris, and unfortunately led to a dead end. Was it a project too ambitious for a place like Chile? It probably was, since two significant factors conspired against it; it was too remote to be accessible for a wider audience and it was never seen as a place where Chilean and Latin American art expression could interact as dynamic living practices. A too innovative project for an artist considered as 'folkloric' in Chile? As Dillon says

Parra's cultural centre was many things; it blurred the boundaries private and public space, creating an exhibition space in which she sought to engage popular imagination. In this sense along with its obvious links to the South American *peña* movement, Parra's exhibition space presented artistic ideas that were extremely avant-garde, such as the identification of art with life, which was at the heart of *Arte Povera*. (Dillon, 2013, p. 204)

Parra viewed herself as an interdisciplinary artist who successfully presented in Europe the way different art forms interact in order to artistically translate the cultural values of rural Chile. But in Chile itself she was never seen in that light; instead, she was viewed as a folk singer-songwriter, and sister of the poet Nicanor Parra. Violeta's international achievements did not have total recognition in her country; on the contrary, she was discredited as a poet and visual artist (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1992, pp. 115-119; Rodríguez, 2015, p. 42; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, pp. 100-102). I shall address this individually in the next chapters. Her oeuvre was never considered as a type of art because the modern and urban Chilean society of the mid-1960s was of bourgeois origin and strongly influenced by the United States of America, whose canons were therefore dominant (Vilches, 2008). As Morales argues

⁴⁰ Margot Loyola was one of the most important Chilean folklorists of the twentieth century. She studied piano at the conservatory and developed as a singer and researcher of Chilean folk song publishing many albums and textbooks. In 1994, she was awarded the National Prize for Music.

In Chile, as in any Latin American country, peasant folk culture, of oral transmission, and urban culture generated in the framework of bourgeois and industrial society [...] are incompatible with each other: they have foundations and respond to conceptions of antagonistic life. [...] Urban culture by its very nature can only develop at the expense of traditional folkloric culture, condemning it to its disappearance [...] The only way in which it admits, when it does not destroy it, is by way of reduction, museum of antiquities 'outdoors' (Morales, 2003, p. 33)

Parra's idea of creating a living museum of rural cultures in the outskirts of the Chilean capital was therefore a utopia that was arguably condemned to fail mainly because in that moment the foreign entertainment industry was successful with the emergence of rock & roll music and new figures such as the Beatles, while the politically committed neofolklore was the main local trend (Manns, 1977, p. 61). Thus, the reception of Parra's interdisciplinary venture was quite different to that she had had in Europe, partly because of the problematic location of Parra's tent, while her teaching centre of popular art also met with a lack of popularity. Recurring illnesses due to her living conditions, a break-up with partner Gilbert, and financial difficulties meant that Parra's creativity was limited to sporadic singing and teaching. Still, in 1966, Parra published a collective album titled *La Carpa de la Reina* [Figure 23] and recorded some verses from her autobiography she had written for the album *Décimas autobiográficas* that was published in 1976, on which I shall go into detail in the next chapters. Much has been said about the motivations behind Parra's suicide; however, the strongest evidence suggests she could not understand the fact her art and work promoting Chilean art did not have the same good reception in Chile that it had in Europe. For example, in an article titled 'Violeta Parra y su Drama' (Ferrada, 1966) from *Ecran* magazine, it is stated that Parra had attempted suicide while struggling with allergies in her hands. Parra, on the other hand, strongly criticizes the fact the press was so quick to interview her in the hospital and as soon as there was a rumor of a suicide; meanwhile her *Carpa de la Reina* did not receive the same journalistic interest and attention.⁴¹ Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 215) wrote: "that they do not deny me the land to plant my storm, that they do not deny me the bird that has to carry my memories [...] that adjust the decisions of every chief in charge".

⁴¹ Parra (Ferrada, 1966) declared: "I'm bored of struggling. Others shall do it. I had planned to go to Switzerland with my husband [Gilbert Favre], where I've got an exhibition of arpilleras and paintings. I wanted to do it in March, when I thought that everything would be going according to plan. How do we not get desperate? If we had more audience, the lessons we plan to give there would already be working. [...] There is so much to do, but if nothing produces money, things cannot go on."

Overall, Parra's poetical translation was revealed in different ways, even literally, but going beyond conventional forms of artistry. Thus, in trying to translate poetics from one medium to another, the mnemonic premise – the imitation - may be the starting point, but the final outcome - the translated poetics - might lead to a new poetics, full of new possibilities and meanings – as expressed by Parra herself in the Swiss documentary portrait, when describing how she started the arpillera *El Circo* [Figure 8]:

One day I saw wool and a piece of cloth and I started to embroider anything, but the first time nothing came out – why? Because I knew what I wanted to do. The second time I grabbed the piece of cloth, I undid it and I wanted to copy a flower. But I could not, in the end, the arpillera was not a flower but a bottle. I wanted to put a cork on the bottle, and it looked like a head. I added eyes, nose, and mouth. The flower was not a bottle, the bottle was not a bottle but a woman. (Parra, 2014k, track 3)

This self-description of how she started translating into visual poetics is the opposite of the familiar descriptions of mainstream-trained contemporary artists, and has therefore led to her being traditionally perceived as a rural, uneducated and apolitical individual designated as self-taught (Fine, 2006). It must be highlighted that the term self-taught is only applicable to the artist but not to the art piece (Fine, 2006, p. 3). Parra's learning process, described above, was in fact self-taught, but her art does not lack knowledge, organization, political ideology, or value, as we shall see throughout this thesis.



Figure 23, Violeta Parra, *Carpa de la Reina*, LP cover, 1966, ODEON.



Figure 24, Violeta Parra, Christ de Quinchamali, 1959, no information, black and white photography from the exhibition catalogue (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 6).



Figure 25, Violeta Parra exhibiting at an open-air art fair organized by The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago de Chile, 1960. She is sitting in front of the 'Les Marchands des Peanuts' (on her right) and 'La cantatrice chauve' (on her left). Biblioteca Nacional de Chile collection.

Visual Poetics

Parra's visual arts represent an outstanding paradox in contrast to her music and poetry; it was the last means of expression she started to practise and, at the same time, the one which brought her most success in her lifetime as her visual art was exhibited at the world's most prestigious cultural institution. In fact Parra's best-sellers were without doubt her arpilleras, as the Baroness de Rothschild was willing to pay whatever amount was necessary for them (Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 99). Nonetheless, one may think Parra's visual skills were not as highly developed as her musical and poetical skills because she did not have any training, in contrast to the grounding she had in folk song and popular poetry. I will address this in the following chapters.

Parra began working on visual crafts around 1958, by embroidering figures on a blanket, and also making some ceramics and paintings (Parra, 2011, p. 227). However, there are many influences that could explain this. The first one is the influence of her mother who made up clothes for her children from pieces of clothes she repaired, which Parra also did sometimes (Parra, 2011, p. 44; Parra, 2014k). The second influence was derived when she was researching rural areas of Chile learning of practices such as 'greda de Quinchamalí', in a place 32 kilometers away from Parra's hometown, that is well known for its black ceramics (Lago, 1954, p. 300; 1971, p. 25). The third influence could be claimed to come from artists known to Parra, such as the Chilean painters Julio Escámez, Nemesio Antúnez and Roberto Matta, and the Spanish painter Roser Bru (Parra, 2011, p. 75). I have not found any statement by Parra referring to other artists in terms of her own works or research; however, some people claim that Parra often spoke about artists Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró (Parra 2014; Oviedo, 1990, p. 92; Parra, 2011, p. 52).

According to the Louvre catalogue (Brunhammer, 1964), Parra's first works were the arpilleras *Le Christ de Quinchamalí* [the Jesus Christ of Quinchamalí], created in 1959, and *Les Marchands de Cacahuètes* [the peanut sellers], started in 1959 and finished in 1964. Regarding the former [Figure 24], Parra (Ibid., p. 8) says that "his body is black like the land of Quinchamalí, whose women make pots", explaining that she used the black colour to depict the crucified Jesus Christ because that village is very famous in Chile for its black clay figures. Regarding the latter [Figure 25], Parra (Ibid., p. 9) explains that "the day of the national holiday of Chile on September 18th: they [the peanut sellers] also sell flags and attract the public with doves, dogs, their cart shaped boat is called 'el caleuchi', ghost boat of a legend of Chillán". Actually, the *caleuche* is part of the Chiloé mythology - a small island off the coast of southern Chile - which speaks of

the appearance of a ghost ship that sails through the various channels of the archipelago. Although it refers to a Chiloé legend, the word *caleuche* comes from the Mapuche language that may be translated as 'transformed people', and it is well-known by most of the Chilean inhabitants. Here, we have a type of translation which visually represents cultural practices; namely the craft activity of clay-makers and the people who use boat-shaped carts to sell peanuts [Appendix 14].

In 1963, Parra was included in the Exhibition of Instinctive Painting at the Popular Art Museum of the University of Chile in Santiago from the 18th June to 6th July. Unfortunately no detailed information is offered other than the title of the two works by Parra exhibited: *Crucifixión* and *Fauna* (Lago, 1963, p. 7). The exhibition curator, and Nicanor's friend, the folk scholar Tomas Lago (1903-1975) introduces this style of exhibition in a very critical view of contemporary art worth considering here:

There is talk of the millions that so-and-so earns, of the mighty sums that the last successful artist commanded. It is art confused with the cry of fashion, among the luxury goods of a richness as onerous as it is transitory. But with the same speed with which they appear the famous names disappear. Instinct painting is anecdotal, realistic, symbolic. [...] While this happens on the stage of artistic life, other points of interest appear in the fields of access, to compensate for the dissatisfaction left on the people by an art too strict and reasoned, the result of specialization and therefore too much separated from the simple appearances of life. From here the interest in the cultures of primitive peoples such as black art, from Oceania, the Arctic, have opened a new perspective to aesthetic studies bringing to light a series of values hidden in those anonymous products. But perhaps its most significant condition is the lack of professionalism in it, and its disinterest, since it is not specifically made to be sold but to satisfy a spontaneous vocation. [...] Let us learn from the humility and love with which they have been made, the permanent lesson that emanates from them for the cultivation of art and the very existence of painting as the search and revelation of the world. (Lago, 1963, pp. 2-4)

Nicanor (Morales, 2003, p. 83) claimed that his sister did not know Leonardo Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* nor the Louvre, because she was so focused on herself. This claim is quite interesting because Nicanor himself was going to declare that he did not know enough of the poetry tradition at the time he published his antipoems because of his studies in physics as we shall see in the next chapter. We could agree with Nicanor's claims to some extent, for example, regarding Violeta as a neophyte in Western art history, which is reasonable because she never went to an art academy. In fact, she was not interested in learning about it as she pointed out in a letter she wrote to Nicanor in June 1963 from France, explaining she did not want to know about its history: "I don't have much interest in The Arc de Triomphe, either to learn its dates or its illustrious names" (Parra, 2011, p. 157). On the other hand, we can disagree to the extent that Parra's lack of art training

did not mean lack of knowledge; as we shall see in the next chapters, Nicanor himself explained he always showed or taught to Violeta the canonical works of literature, music and art: Violeta says it in French in the song 'Escúchame Pequeño': "It's my brother who made me know the music. It's my brother who told me 'you have to work the clay'" (Parra, 1993, p. 37). In a letter dated 19th June, 1964, Parra provided a glimpse of what she thought after having exhibited at the Louvre and showed she was aware about what it meant, while in another letter dated one year before she writes about how difficult it was (Parra, 2011, pp. 175-184). For example, in 1964, she (Ibid., p. 185) claims to be the first "South-American artist exhibiting at the 'Pavillon Marsan' of the Louvre which is not easy to do, it is like wanting to take the moon with your hands" and concluding that the art critic Anatole Jacovsky has recently included Parra's name in the dictionary of naïve painters he was writing.

In the documentary filmed by Swiss television in 1965 (Parra, 2014k, track 3), Parra provides a detailed account of her visual language [track 5]. At 06:06 Parra is asked to explain the tapestry *Contra la guerra* [Figure 26].⁴² She replies that the figure in the left side represents her because it is coloured with purple, which is the meaning of her name in Spanish. The simpleness and naturalness of that answer suggests that it was Parra herself who systematically and deliberately gave that meaning to her visual works and therefore linked it with her own living experiences (Dillon, 2013, p. 70; Brunhammer, 1964, p. 8). For example, the woman in the arpillera titled *Arbol de la Vida* [Figure 27] is embroidered in shades of purple. She also expressed this in a letter in which she plays with the colours purple and black:

Morado y negro son los colores que me persiguen, flores moradas, botones negros líneas negras, puntitos morados, papel de carta con orillas negras tinta morada mostacilla negra adentro de un estuche morado todas las tardes arboles morados, hasta que el negro de la noche los disuelve a su modo. Un verdadero cuadro de morados y negros mi reflejo en la luna del espejo quebrado me deslizo en mi pena se me olvidó reír... (Parra, 2011, p. 161)

[Purple and black are the colors that chase me, purple flowers, black buttons black lines, purple dots letter paper with black edges purple ink black mostacilla inside a purple case every evening purple blooms, until the black at night he dissolves them in his own way. A true picture of purple and black my reflection in the moon of the broken mirror I slip in my grief I forgot to laugh ...]

⁴² In the Louvre catalogue, it is explained that this arpillera is "dominated by the terrestrial globe and the flags of the Chilean fetes, framed by the guitars of the feast of peace, four characters who want peace: Violeta Parra (in purple), an Argentine friend, a Finnish friend, a Chilean friend." (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 9).



Figure 26, Violeta Parra, 1963, *Contra la guerra*, tela bordada, 141.5 x 193 cms, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 27, Violeta Parra, 1963, *Árbol de la vida*, yute embroidered with wool, 135 x 97.5 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 28, Julio Escámez, 1957, Historia de la medicina y la farmacia en Chile, mural at Concepción, Chile.



Figure 29, Julio Escámez' mural close up with the purple figure of a woman said to be Violeta Parra

However, there is evidence that might reveal the origin of this significance, and that it would be tied to a deeply important personal experience in Parra's life before she began to paint and embroider. In 1957, Parra met and established a short but intense relationship in the city of Concepción with the Chilean artist Julio Escámez (1925-2015), a prominent painter who had returned to that city after having completed a specialization in fresco mural technique in Florence, Italy (RMCLC, 2017). Unfortunately, all the bibliography that has covered this relationship has been limited to offer intimate and banal personal details that do little or nothing to help to understand and to appreciate the art and the artist (Parra, 2006, p. 143). Escámez, who had previously travelled to other South American countries, specialized in the technique of Mexican muralism guided by the Chilean painter Gregorio de la Fuente (1910-1999), author of the mural *History of Concepcion* (1942-1945). Being also influenced by the outstanding Mexican muralists Diego Rivera (1886-1957) and David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896-1974), Escámez developed his own visual technique that deepened a social message: "the mural expresses a look of the time in which the artist has to live, the mural cannot be entirely decorative, it has to reflect ideas" (Zamorano Pérez and Cortés López, 2007, p. 282). In fact, Escámez (2016, p. 109) considered that "art allows decoding of the underlying ideological contents throughout the social symbology, thus revealing the contradictions they conceal". Between 1957 and 1958, he was commissioned to paint a mural of approximately twenty-

four square metres entitled 'History of Medicine and Pharmacy in Chile' [Figure 28] for a newly created pharmacy in the city of Concepción, owned by local pharmacist María Maluje David (Vidal, 2006, p. 147; Sáez, 2017 p. 118). Divided into three parts and using the fresco technique, Escámez begins the first part with a "prehistory" of medicine and pharmacy in Chile, prior to colonization, focusing on the Araucana area on the left side, specifically in the description of the Mapuche tradition.⁴³ It is possible to see a Machi - the traditional healer - picking medicinal plants next to a canelo tree on the left, while a group of men on horseback to the centre divides the right where a ceremony is performed, surrounded by a Ruca [the Mapuche house] and other traditional figures. The Mapuche culture effectively uses herbs and plants such as the quillay or boldo to cure diseases, a practice that continues to this day. In the second panel, Escámez shows the medical practice developed by the Jesuits during the colonization, highlighting a first 'evolution' of this practice. The interesting thing about the image is that on the left side is apparently a convent where priests collect plants from the ground. On the right side and outside of this enclosure, there are patients waiting to be taken care of, and a room where they are treated. In the third part, Escámez presents the modern practice of urban medicine, where he shows the manufacture and research by what we might call a pharmaceutical school. He also makes reference to such figures as the local chemist Daniel Belmar in the upper left, and the professor of the University of Concepción Alejandro Lipschutz in the lower part. Outside of that building, a group of women holding plants and a man on his back reading a newspaper appear, where it is possible to see the image of the atomic bomb while a woman feeds a white dove - a symbol of peace. On the right side, it is possible to see the vaccination activity of the population, where Escámez also paints his friends, such as Nicanor Parra and Nemesio Antúnez, among others. Among these friends painted in this mural that was declared a national monument, is the figure of a woman painted in purple colours: Violeta Parra [Figure 29]. It is claimed that Escámez used a portrait that Parra herself gave him when she was young to depict her in the mural (Oviedo, 1990, p. 70; Sáez, 2017 p. 118). On the right side of the third mural, it is possible to see this woman dressed in violet, with long black hair and a bouquet of flowers in her hands.

From Escámez' representation of her, arguably Parra used the idea of representing herself in purple as she stated when explaining *Contra la Guerra*. That Parra-like figure that Parra painted in purple also has a type of flower on her head; a symbol very similar to the bouquet of flowers painted by Escámez. But another interesting feature of *Contra la Guerra* is the figures that appear over the heads of the

⁴³ According to Angel Parra (2006, p. 142), Escámez had Mapuche roots.

four characters that Parra describes as their souls and who love peace. Parra (2014k, track 3) says that each character has a soul represented in the form of flowers or plants. From left to right, the figures correspond to herself in purple, in red is an Argentine friend, in green a Chilean friend, and separated by a black rifle, on the right, is an indigenous Chilean in blue.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the colour blue has a sacred character for the Mapuche, having a transcendental significance for that culture. Is this specifically a visual reference to the Mapuche culture? Might this explain why Parra uses the colour blue to represent the oppressed Mapuche chieftain Caupolicán in *Fresia y Caupolicán* [Figure 30] as criticism regarding the repression suffered by this culture from colonialism to the present day?

Also, could Parra have taken her own portrait on the mural as a cell of visual significance to transfer a deeply social message and clearly one of protest like that of *Contra la Guerra*? It is likely since in the same documentary Parra says that she does not like social instability in her country and that her way of protesting is through her art, since it includes a rifle and a dove. The dove symbol is also translated as a poetical figure in her autobiography, linking it to her own person: "First part, gentlemen. My father continues to drink, since I am his dove, I soothe him with my musical ornaments" (Parra, 1998, p. 79). The bird symbol is extensively used by Parra to signify her own figure: "if it's true that I suffered, that gave me force, later it gave me feathers, like a singing thrush, today a flying bird, which is not stopped even by the devil" (Ibid., p. 83-84). According to Sáez (2017 p. 93), Parra had seen the dove image linked to peace in the 'Fifth World Festival of Youth and Students' poster in Warsaw in 1955 [Appendix 15], as well as Picasso's dove imagery [Appendix 16]. Did she follow the meaning of this symbol for her visual art? This artistic ideology of including a social message as a visual narrative strategy is characteristic of the Mexican muralists who adopted this style after the devastating social consequences of revolutions and wars. On the other hand, Parra related to artists such as Roser Bru (1923), Nemesio Antúnez and Roberto Matta, among the best known. Therefore, arguably she was able to learn and internalize, to a lesser or greater extent, the techniques and visual languages of all these artists as reference. For example, we have learned a probable source of Parra's identification with the colour of her name; we can also infer other probable implications such as the identification of other colours. Furthermore, the depiction of a Mapuche sacred ceremony which Escámez' depicted in his mural and then Parra translated into her painting *Machitún* [Figure 34], is also another likely antecedent for Escámez influence on Parra. Can we state that the

⁴⁴ In the Musée des Arts Decoratifs' exhibition catalogue the characters are Parra herself, an Argentinean friend, a Finnish friend, and a Chilean friend.

untitled painting from Figure 31 may be a Mapuche individual who holds a bunch of flowers? Again, this untitled oil on canvas shows the ‘arpillera’ feature described before, as Parra seems to poetically translate the embroidering technique to the painting, in this case through the systematic use of dots.



Figure 30, Violeta Parra, *Fresia y Caupolicán*, 1964-1965, jute sewn and embroidered with wool, 142 x 196 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 31, Violeta Parra, untitled, 170,5 x 152,5 cm, oil on wood. Nicanor Parra collection.

Still, another interesting feature about *Contra la Guerra* is the figures that appear on the heads of the four characters that Parra describes as their souls. They are quite similar to a Paracas culture figure in Peru [Appendix 17]; although Parra did not mention anything about it, the similarities are outstanding. When asked about her painting by Brumagne, she explained that for her painting is the sad and dark side of life, in which she tries to express the innermost depths of the human being, whereas the arpillera represents the joyful part of life. Then Brumagne asks Parra about the way she uses colours in painting, as she uses just one over many canvases instead of focusing on one canvas as is traditional, to which Parra answers:

For me, fifteen paintings work like one. I have thirty characters who do different things on them. So I choose a single colour to keep what I feel it represents in all the canvases, for example, the essence of an expression. I cannot jump from the eyes to the feet because I need to paint the expression of the eyes. I leave the feet for later. These are difficult things to explain. [Because] before I could not clean my brush because I used oil. It was cumbersome to have to clean my brush when I wanted to change colour. So right now I paint everything I have to paint black once. With black you feel in a different way than with red. (Parra, 2014k, track 3)

This is really interesting because it shows that Parra was able to keep large form structures in her head, and also she stated the role and meaning of colours. Thus, a single colour epitomizes a feel expression that is translated through different paintings. These influences may help to outline Parra's poetics of translation in art whose nature seems to mix traditional practices with modern nuances.

The European art of the 1960s was dominated by movements such as Neo-Dadaism, Pop Art and Collage, which "favoured reality rather than abstract painting and sought to include real items in their creations" (Dillon, 2013, pp. 176-177). In this context, Parra's Musée des arts Decoratifs at the Louvre exhibition catalogue offers interesting details of her visual production that encompassed sixteen arpilleras, six masks, twenty-six paintings, and thirteen sculptures. The fact must be highlighted that out of these sixty-one works, only the arpilleras are briefly explained in the catalogue, described as "arpilleras made with large dots of colored wool on natural burlap or colored on reps." (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 8). Thus, Parra's visual language was clearly another means of expression with which to translate her own world into a non-verbal media. This is clear from the first sentence:

Music and colour are related for Violeta, who passes naturally from one to another, and who sees in each song a scene ready to be painted. On arpilleras or rough canvases, she embroiders lively images in wool with big stitches that illustrate a Chilean story and a legend. She tells the poverty of the people or a moving episode in her own life. She uses a poetic and symbolic language, endowing significance to each theme, each colour, without ignoring the plasticity,

the aesthetic side of her work. Each one of her arpilleras is a story, a remembrance, or a visual protest.

Her small drawings are more intimate. They are intense and serious poems about her difficult and courageous life. With her wire sculptures, her dream occupies a universe of plasticity, woven and birds and doves, and bulls and llamas, of trees that sing and of legendary personages, such as Don Quixote.

Instinctive and wilful, Violeta Parra appropriates the world and makes it her work. She animates all that she touches from a perspective that is precise, original in her words and sounds, form and colours. She is a total artist, musician, painter, sculptor, ceramist, a poet like her brother, Nicanor Parra, and her friend, Pablo Neruda.⁴⁵ (Brunhammer, 1964, pp. 1-2).

The presentation by the Louvre's curator printed in the catalogue exhibition contained the description of some artwork, pictures of some works and also the poem that Nicanor dedicated to Violeta called 'In defence of Violeta Parra', which I shall explain in the next chapter. It was the first time that the world's most famous artistic institution had exhibited a Latin American artist, and Parra developed the same interdisciplinary ideas here as she had in Chile and Argentina.⁴⁶ It was a successful event attended by such luminaries as the artist Roberto Matta and the Parisian aristocrat Baroness de Rothschild, among others (Parra, 2011, pp. 181-182). The exhibition was filmed [track 7] as Parra played the guitar, served traditional Chilean food, and sang some songs to illustrate her visual art, such as 'Parabienes de novios' [track 8], recorded in France for the album *Chants e Danses du Chili vol. 2* (1956), that inspired the arpillera *Les fiancés paysans* (Kerschen, 2010, pp. 150-162; Parra 2014). Again, this arpillera shows Parra's deliberate will of translating a song into a visual work. Yet, in the Louvre's exhibition catalogue there are two works that clearly demonstrates this although they are not for public viewing. *Les fiancés paysans* is an "illustration of the Chilean folk song 'Parabienes a los novios'" (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 8). Unfortunately, this arpillera has not been reproduced in any publication so we do not know what is on it, a situation that can hopefully be rectified in the future. However, there is a high probability that this arpillera corresponds to the one in the Figure 32, which appears in Parra's Louvre film (Parra, 2014k, track 2).

⁴⁵ Translated by Karen Kerschen (2010, pp. 157-158).

⁴⁶ Erica Verba (2013), questions to what extent was Parra's art 'authentic', by arguing that she made up a 'performance of authenticity' created in order to be 'discovered' and 'perceived' as an 'other' different 'element'; concluding that this idea meant 'authenticity' in a cosmopolitan city such as Paris.



Figure 32, Violeta Parra, *Les fiancés paysans* (?), 1960. synthetic fabric embroidered with wool, 1.38 x 0.92 cm, no info.

The second is an – unpublished - painting titled *Fugue* - 1964, 0,27 x 0,41 cm, “toile” - (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 11). Parra’s *Fugue* [Figure 33] is an interesting and unique case because, as we have seen, most of her visual works refer to rural practices and even urban Chile, but this unknown oil on canvas clearly refers to art music; the type of music she neither studied nor played formally. This literal reference recalls famous pieces such as Wassily Kandinsky’s *Fugue* (1914) [Appendix 18], Paul Klee’s *Fuge in Rot* (1921) [Appendix 19], but also the lesser known *Amorpha: Fugue in Two Colors* (1912) by František Kupka [Appendix 20] and Ciurlionis’ *Fugue* [Appendix 8]. Similarly, *Les fiancés paysans* also suggests a deliberate reference to art music language - while referring to rural Chile. For example, if we have a close look at the Louvre exhibition film, it might correspond to Figure 32[?]. Still, the striking fact is that Parra depicted a quaver note in the upper right of this arpillera, making reference to art music language.



Figure 33, 'Violeta Parra, Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Palais du Louvre' catalogue, where it is stated that the painting titled *Fugue* was exhibited, p. 11.



Figure 34, Violeta Parra, *Machitún*, 1964-1965, oil on wood, 31.5 x 46 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

There is another interesting poetical translation in the Louvre catalogue encompassed by five pieces that “illustrate the legend of the last Inca king” (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 13). They are *Les conquistadors tuent le roi* [the conquistadors kill the king], *Les trois filles du roi pleurent leur père* [the three daughters of the king mourn their father], *Les trois filles du roi déposent le coeur et les yeux de leur père dans un pot* [the three daughters of the king deposit the heart and the eyes of their father in a pot], *'El Machitún', ou les indiens prient pour leur roi* [the Indians pray for their king], and *Le fille curieuse* [the curious daughter]. Unfortunately, the first painting has not been published, but of the other four, just the last one seems not to be in line with the indigenous legend theme. For example, *The Machitún* [Figure 34], translates the Mapuche ceremony where ill people are treated by the Machi, as mentioned, who is the community doctor, “someone with an acknowledged level of wisdom in charge of the community’s well-being”, so that, in depicting this ritual, “the machi or healer takes two forms: one solid black form and another grey spectral form. This duality reflects her (or his) position as an intermediary between the realms of the terrestrial and the spiritual” (Dillon, 2013, p. 59). According to Dillon (Ibid., p.28), in *Les trois filles du roi pleurent leur père* [Figure 35], and *Les trois filles du roi déposent le coeur et les yeux de leur père dans un pot* [Figure 36] Parra seeks to “portray an Inca bereavement” because “While most people associate the Inca with Peru, the Inca territory reached beyond Santiago in Chile [...] Parra sought to generate unity from diversity and present an Americanism based on indigeneity past and present by giving voice to the cultural production of subaltern groups, making little distinction on the grounds of ethnicity.” (Ibid., p.17). This might explain why the Louvre catalogue seems to mix the Inca and Mapuche into a five-piece series, but *Le fille curieuse* [Figure 37] does not seem to fit into this theme since its imagery does not imply a traditional indigenous event.



Figure 35, Violeta Parra, *Las tres hijas del rey lloran a su padre*, 1964, oil on wood, 31.3 x 45.2 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection



Figure 36, Violeta Parra, *Las tres hijas del rey depositan el corazón y los ojos de su padre en una vasija*, 1964, oil on wood, 31 x 47 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 37, Violeta Parra, *La hija curiosa*, 1964, oil on hardboard, 50 x 70 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to detail Parra's interdisciplinary approach as well as exploring how some of her poetics are translated across her visual art. Parra's poetics of translation is clearly exemplified by her creative interpretation of the action of people dancing the cueca when following the pattern of a weave. Peasant women such as her mother Clarisa were a primary source of knowledge and the model of a woman who carries out multiple daily tasks: she regarded her mother as the true artist. But this raises an obvious question. Having learned that Parra dedicated visual pieces to her children, why we do not know of any piece dedicated by Parra to her mother? Parra's visual art, specifically, has two clear roots. The first is her self-taught visual skills developed from everyday practices such as sewing, knitting, and so forth. The second background root she learned and absorbed from artist friends such as Julio Escámez. The evidence suggests that Parra's circus activities, which comprised multiple roles, were her first experience of interdisciplinary art since childhood. This experience eventually crystallized in her own interdisciplinary show; *Estampas de América*. Likewise, Parra's research gave her the awareness of the ways in which two different arts, poetry and music, as well as their organizations and systems, converge to work together. But also, Parra's *Cantos Folkloricos Chilenos* may be understood as an interdisciplinary 'creative translation' because here she transposed not just the variety of traditional poetry and music, but the traditional sayings, customs, performance styles, dances, clothes, housing, etc., which later led her to create a museum where all these items could be permanently displayed. Similarly, Parra remarkably undertook the task of representing real events through the radio programme *Así Canta Violeta Parra* in which she translated traditional events in which they could be audibly described and understood, before the advent of television.

Parra's interdisciplinary profile started to crystallize when she exhibited, performed, cooked and created at an open-air fair in Santiago de Chile around 1959 and later in Argentina, through interdisciplinary exhibitions and participation in the theatre production *Vivre*, where she set a Neruda text to music, which she planned to develop into a major work. In 1961, Parra wrote an interdisciplinary proposal for a new media where she states that every song may be painted. Similarly, Parra tried to create some work for the new audiovisual medium of television, in similar ways to her earlier work on the radio, and later tried to make a documentary showing her exhibitions in Europe. Parra's interdisciplinary exhibition at the Louvre, in which she displayed visual arts, served food, danced and played music, was significant because she was officially presented as an interdisciplinary artist for whom "Music and colour are related". It also

highlighted her artistry in being able to move from one art form to another, seeing "in each song a scene ready to be painted". This was later fully developed in the multi-purpose space she called *La Carpa de la Reina*, which unfortunately was not a success. In Switzerland Parra explained the interdisciplinary procedure she used to write her music: "I drew with lines and dots to remember the melodies and reread the drawings I had imagined". This clearly exemplifies the way Parra could translate, encode and cross-signify from musical sound to visual figuration, which inevitably brings to mind Kandinsky's interdisciplinary ideas, mentioned before. Similarly, Parra's use of colour in her visual art is explicitly interdisciplinary, as illustrated by her disclosure that she tries to use a single colour to express a particular poetic idea because black, for example, expresses different connotations to those suggested by red. This also exemplifies how Parra's poetics work; they are present across the media and interrelated. Thus, we have discussed the types of themes and how Parra visually translated Chilean traditions into a figurative media by illustrating songs, and also portrayed art music language by depicting quavers or titling a painting 'fugue'. Likewise, we have looked at influences that could have shaped Parra's visual art which was classified as naive at an exhibition of popular art, at a time when art was already commercially lucrative, and notable for millionaire collectors and dealers. The simultaneously growing interest of aesthetic scholars in hidden primitive cultures saw in these crafts the value of spontaneous expression and a more authentic 'revelation of the world'. This informal, oral, and unwritten artistry and knowledge, however, had deep social implications as she and her friends were involved within the so-called socially engaged art whose final goal had an ideological and mobilizing motivation as the Mexican muralism demonstrates. Accordingly, the most important thing is the message and its cultural values; the central point is the message rather than the medium. That is why Parra declared "I would stay with the people" when asked which art medium she would choose if she had to choose one. Overall, Parra was going to use her art to shape and build her own political and ideological stance within an unofficial oppressed culture as we shall see in chapter five. This is in clear contradiction to the notions and links that high-art narrative has historically made between the popular and the instinctive arts. Furthermore, as in her music, there are visual translations of Parra's own poetics and those she collected which may be regarded as creative translations. Parra's work was distinctive in the ways she translated oral imageries into visual arts, meaning that she had to condense the story being depicted. This is the contrary of the traditional practice of ekphrasis that aims to depict visual imagery with words "to report in detail". Having analysed the nature of Parra's poetics of translation, we can move on to explore one of the three poetical languages on which she based her poetics of translation: her literary poetics.

Chapter III

Literary Poetics

Popular singers live with a Bible under their arms.

Violeta Parra
Poésie Populaire des Andes

From Antipoetry to Anticuecas

'Cumpleaños 80 de Nicanor' (birthday 80th of Nicanor Parra) [track 9]
(Cueca by Roberto Parra)

Ya bajaron del olimpo
con clarines y trompetas
la Gabriela con Neruda
a saludar al Poeta.

They are already down from Olympus
With flutes and trumpets
Gabriela with Neruda
To greet the poet.

llegaron al Mapocho
con la Violeta
cantando parabienes
para el poeta.
Para el poeta mi alma
Nicanor Parra
Invitada de Honor
Violeta Parra.

They arrived at the Mapocho [river]
with Violeta
singing 'parabienes'
for the poet
for the poet 'mi alma'
Nicanor Parra
the honoured guest
Violeta Parra

Una Flor de Violeta
Para el poeta.
(Parra, 1996, p. 13)

A Violet flower
For the poet

This text is a song that Violeta's brother, Roberto Parra (1921-1995),⁴⁷ dedicated to Nicanor on his eightieth birthday. What interests me the most about this text is its possible meanings, implications, and readings. Besides making clear the key figures surrounding Nicanor's antipoetry, it may also establish the artistic interrelationship between Violeta and Nicanor. The intellectual relationship between these siblings is well documented; in fact, they declared it many times, expressing their affinity, admiration for, and influence on each other. However, it is worth mentioning some curious facts before developing this section. In all books and documentaries that reconstruct Parra's life and art, Nicanor is the only sibling who has had little or nothing to say about Violeta. For example, in the first attempt, *Gracias a la vida, Violeta Parra testimonio* (1976), Nicanor intervenes very briefly narrating Violeta's arrival in Santiago early in the 1930s, while her children, brothers and sister all speak far more than he does (Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 35). Similarly, in the first documentary, *Viola Chilensis* (Vera, 2005), Nicanor is the only living relative who does not appear to speak as everybody else around Violeta offers their testimony. Also, Nicanor is the one who keeps the letter that Violeta had when she was found dead, in which she explained the reasons for her suicide, but

⁴⁷ Musician and writer, best known for being the creator of the Chilean jazz called 'Jazz Guachaca', and for writing the famous theatre play 'La Negra Ester'.

this has been privately hidden from public knowledge. Morales (2003, p. 16) questions and criticises Isabel Parra's censorship in publishing only part of Parra's letters, but at the same time, does not say anything at all regarding why Nicanor does not make public the suicide letter as Nicanor showed it to him (Ibid., p. 99). In the next pages, I will focus on Parra's most important influence, looking at the nature of Nicanor Parra's antipoetry, which may provide significant insights into his sister's work. However, I shall question the extent of this assumed influence, in discussing and interrogating Violeta Parra's early explorations of the rural practices that later crystallized in albums and in her book, *Poésie Populaire des Andes*, defined by her as Chilean folk songs.

Nicanor Parra, born in 1914, was considered the foremost living poet in Latin America until 2018, when he died on January 23rd. In 1938, he graduated as a teacher of mathematics and physics, then received a scholarship to study mechanics at Brown University in the United States in 1943, and a further stipend in 1949 to study cosmology at Oxford, England. Still, Nicanor gave up his studies at Oxford because he became increasingly deeply impressed by English literature and the classical tradition, specifically William Shakespeare, but also William Blake, who had poetically illustrated – translated – his own poems (Piña, 1990, p. 180; Parra, 1954, p. 14). Violeta herself paid tribute to her older brother in *Décimas: Autobiografía en Verso*, depicting him as the father she had lost as a young woman; and this décima graphically depicts this role:

Décima LXI

Del momento en que llegué
mi pobr' hermano estudiante
se convirtió, en un instante,
en pair' y maire a la vez.

From the moment I arrived
My poor student brother
He quickly became
A father and mother at the same time.

Me lleva a una sastrería,
me compr' un lindo uniforme;
se considera conforme
del verme de azul vestida.
En una paquetería
mercerizados café,
enagua seda crepé,
zapatos de cabritilla.
Cambiaba la sopaipilla
del momento en que llegué.

He takes me to a tailor shop,
He buys me nice school-clothes;
He feels well
Seeing me dressed in blue
In a package
Mercerized⁴⁸ coffee,
Silk crepe petticoat,
Kid shoes
Changed the *sopaipilla*
From the moment I arrived.

Regreso muy orgullosa
a casa de mi pairino;
me miran con desatino,
me deshojaron la rosa.

I come back very proud
To my godfather's house
They look at me with folly,
They defoliated the rose.

⁴⁸ No reference for this word exists in Parra's book. It may refer to mercerization, a chemical process used to give a shiny and silky appearance to cotton fabric or thread.

Si ellas siguen fastidiosas
yo me hago l'interesante,
que dicen qu'estoy flamante
par' ingresar a l'escuela.
Contempla su parentela
mi pobr' hermano estudiante.

If they remain fastidious
I make myself interesting,
They say I'm brand new
To enter the school.
He contemplates his relatives
My poor student brother

No sé de qué están hablando,
pero me siento inconforme
mirándom' el uniforme,
parece qu'estoy llorando.
Mi hermano lo va notando,
defiende con gran desplante:
"La niña es un'aspirante
a un curso de madurez".
La situación al revés
se convirtió en un instante.

I don't know what they're talking about,
But I feel uncomfortable
As they look at my school-clothes,
It seems like I'm crying.
And my brother is noticing it,
Defends with great delight:
"The girl is a candidate
To enter high school."
The situation quickly
Turns upside down.

Al otro día temprano
llegó com' un profesor,
con libros un gran montón
y un mapamundi en la mano.
Con aire de soberano
m'entreg' un libro de inglés,
un cuaderno de francés,
debo embarcarm' en las lenguas.
Se vuelve, cuando me arenga,
en pair' y maire a la vez.

The other day early
He came as a teacher,
With a big pile of books
And a world map in hand.
With sovereign air
He hands me an English book,
A French notebook,
I must learn languages.
He turns, when encouraging me,
In father and mother at the same time.

Del silabario yo aspiro
al primer' humanidá';
demuestro prosperidá'
en el eusamen al tiro.
Mi hermano en preparativo
pasó mes y medio justo,
pero le dio tanto gusto
el día del resulta'o.
No lo he desilusiona'o:
saqué los mejores puntos.
(Parra, 1998, pp. 143-144)

From the Alphabet I seek
To the first grade of the humanities;
I quickly convey prosperity
In the exam
My brother prepared me
It took a month and a half right,
But he was so pleased
The day of the result.
I haven't disappointed him
I've obtained the best marks.

One may wonder whether the extent of this artistic relationship has been considered in artistic terms in Violeta Parra studies. Many texts mention this situation, but in a very superficial way by underscoring the mentoring role played by Nicanor, which Violeta described as follows:

Musically, I felt that my siblings did not go on the way I wanted to and I asked for advice from Nicanor, the brother who has always guided me and encouraged me. I had twenty-five authentic songs. He selected them, and I started playing and singing this selection on my own. Then he demanded I go out and collect at least a thousand songs. 'You have to go into the streets,' he said to me, 'but be aware that you have to face a giant named Margot Loyola.' (Vicuña, 1958, p. 73)

When looking at Nicanor's statements (Morales, 2003, pp. 67-99) it is possible to see the implications of the influence that led Violeta to leave her musical activity carried out mainly in bars at the beginning of the 1950s. For example, Nicanor was a friend of Tomás Lago, an important Chilean folklorist and researcher from whom he learned Chilean music and popular art. In fact, Lago was also born in Chillán and Nicanor dedicated a poem to him in *Poems and Antipoems* entitled 'Words for Tomás Lago' (Parra, 1969). So, this means that Nicanor gained significant knowledge of the value and study of folk and popular culture at a time when the Chilean Folk Society had more than forty years of life since its foundation in 1909 by Rodolfo Lenz (Lenz, 1904; 1894), and at a time when a series of governments gave significance to the material and political development of working-class people.

In his memoir, *Diálogos en un tejado*, Chilean writer Jorge Edwards (2003, p. 63) claims that Nicanor's poetry has two very different roots. The first comes from 'educated' poetry, including the English metaphysical poets, French poets, Spanish poets, as well as Latin American modernists. In fact, in 1954, both *Poems and Antipoems* by Nicanor Parra, and *Elementary Odes* by Pablo Neruda (1904-1973), were published; two key texts that marked a seminal moment in Chilean literature because they represented a challenge to a poetic paradigm: orality or spoken poetry. Yet, Nicanor said something interesting when Mario Benedetti (1920-2009) asked him whether antipoetry means 'Anti-Neruda', and Nicanor answered that "Neruda was always a problem for me; a challenge, an obstacle that was put in my way. So, I had to think about it in terms of this monster. In that sense, the name Neruda is there as a frame of reference" (Benedetti, 1969, p. 14). According to René de Costa (1988, p. 9), Neruda incorporates a more simple poetry with the features of orality, leaving the magnificence of his poetry of *Canto General* aside. Nicanor, on the other hand, was jaded by the successful traditional poetry of Neruda and Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957), and crystalized in his book a kind of 'popular Chilean poetry', a process that had begun in 1938 with his book *Songbook Without a Name*, with clear influences from the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), specifically from his book *Gypsy Ballads* (Costa, 1988, p. 7; Parra, 1954, p. 12), and from surrealism. Nicanor aimed his poetry at the masses with an everyday-language style that some describe as "poetry of speech", contrary to lyrical poetry, that speaks about ordinary lives.

Excerpt from 'The Individual's Soliloquy'

[track 10]

I'm the individual.
 First I lived by a rock
 (I scratched some figures on it)
 Then I looked for some place more suitable.
 I'm the individual.
 [...]
 O.K.
 Perhaps I better go back to that valley,
 To that rock that was home,
 And start scratching all over again,
 Scratching out everything backward,
 The world turned upside-down.
 But life doesn't make sense.
 (Parra, 1969, p. 64)

Thus, these lines come from a type of poetry that aimed to find other ways of writing, by seeking sources, inspiration and meanings for the new Chilean twentieth-century poetry by using an antirhetorical and colloquial language. Yet, Nicanor conceived his seminal book in three sections over a long gestation period. The first two sections, which he called *neoromantic* and *postmodernist*, were started in 1942, and are poems, whereas the antipoems, written in 1948, are in direct contrast. The ground-breaking style is stressed with an introductory 'Warning to the Reader', which concludes: "in my view, a time to modernize this ceremony has come, I bury my pen in the head of the readers" (N. Parra, 1954, p. 73). Costa (1988, p. 17) claims that we can read these three different parts of the book as a clear reference to those upon whom Nicanor is calling to change, and challenging as a way to differentiate: 'Lullaballoo' as anti-Mistral, making clear reference to the Literature Nobel Prize winner Gabriela Mistral's 'Lullabies'; 'Odes for some doves' as anti-Neruda; making clear reference to Pablo Neruda's 'Elementary Odes'; and thirdly and finally, 'Brainteaser' as anti-Parra, in which the author challenges himself, becoming his own adversary. Still, the antipoetry roots go beyond the Chilean literary tradition and the textual references to these Nobel Prize winners. Nicanor (Morales, 1972, pp. 96-102) said he aimed to find a literary reference-framework whose words were not "contaminated by cultural meanings and trite and decaying" through what he denominated as the "historical-critical method", tracing the past for the unpolluted source word:

Long ago, when I started working on poetry, I had an idea that has been repeated to me a lot and has become an obsession in recent times: the idea that mankind is the result of a giant man who exploded million years ago, and what the poet wants to do is reconstruct the original man (...) Since the beginning of the antipoems I tried to reconstruct the man by a method that could be called historical regression. Current thinking (1938) seemed to me to smell like rotten fish; something was wrong. Then I had to go back to see when the fish was fresh.

I stepped back to where I could (...). I was bored very much reading the poetry of the time. I had to go back to see when it began to be practiced as poetry in those terms, and I thought everything came from the Renaissance. I was very happy for a while there thinking that would be able to solve my problem. But no, the Renaissance was nothing but a rethinking of certain Hellenic cultural values, so that the thing is wrong from there, from Greece itself, at least the academic Greece. It was in the Middle Ages where I found vitality and sense, that is, in the village. (Morales, 1972, p. 96).

What Nicanor describes here is his search that seemed to lead him to the so-called medieval 'Goliards'⁴⁹ and 'clerici vagantes' who "described themselves as followers of the legendary Bishop Golias: renegade clerics of no fixed abode who had more interest in rioting and gambling than in the life of a responsible citizen." (Britannica, 2016). These clerics were well known in England, Germany and France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries for their dissident verses targeting mainly the church and the pope, although "the word goliard lost its clerical association, passing into French and English literature of the fourteenth-century in the general meaning of jongleur, or minstrel." (Ibid.).⁵⁰

Thus, the second root of the antipoetry described by Edwards is the so-called people's language, or popular poetry; passed on orally by generations, contrasting with the characteristic features of modern – lyrical - poetry. Interestingly, Edwards (2003, p. 63) suggests that Nicanor and Violeta experienced a common process once they discovered an Argentinian book written in popular verse: "The revelation of *Martin Fierro* [by José Hernández] led Nicanor to the reencounter with the Chilean countryside of the peasant of his childhood and adolescence in Chillán". In other words, Nicanor might have found inspiration in popular poetry at the same time as Violeta began researching folk songs in the Chilean countryside; leading the Parra siblings to have meetings with many peasants, farmers and popular singers, even at Nicanor's home (Parra, 2013, p. 33):

Nicanor's arrival to *Martin Fierro* and the popular poetry was parallel, product of the closeness and the constant conversations with his siblings Roberto and Violeta. I remember long sessions at Nicanor's home, in the early fifties, in which an old popular singer played on his Chilean guitarrón, with the encouragement of a glass of wine, verses 'a lo humano' on the feast of the King Nebuchadnezzar. It was the medieval theme of dance and inexhaustible abundance, Jauja, the City of the Caesars in the Chilean colonial imagination. Popular poems like 'La Cueca

⁴⁹ Luis Kong (2015, p. 27) demonstrates the strong link between Parra's antipoetry and the medieval Goliardic poetry, pointing out that "Goliards expressed, above all, a great interest in literature. Most of them wrote corrosive anonymous poems in vulgar Latin against the ecclesiastical authorities and social power structures of the time."

⁵⁰ Archipoeta, in Latin, is the name given to the anonymous author of *Carmina Burana*, which is among the most famous collections of Latin poems and songs, that range over a variety of subject matter intended to be sung such as "political and religious satire and parody; love songs of an unusual directness; and songs of drinking and riotous life." (Britannica, 2016.)

Larga' which broke the vanguard trends carrying the poetry of Nicanor until that stage, derived in part from those sessions, in that environment. (Edwards, 2003, p. 64).

On the other hand, Nicanor (Morales, 2003, p. 75) claimed that it may have been around 1952, after having returned from England in 1951,⁵¹ when Violeta 'rediscovered' what he called her 'childhood's language'. Nicanor (Ibid., p. 76) declared that, at that time, he was studying Chilean popular poetry, owning some books by Rodolfo Lenz who studied the 'vulgar poetry' for the first time, and was especially interested in publishing an edition of the eighteenth-century counterpoint in verses between 'El mulato Taguada y don Javier de la Rosa' – two *payadores* who improvised in quarter-verses – when Nicanor showed Violeta the verses in quarters and in *décimas*. In that moment, according to Nicanor (Ibid.), Violeta asked him: "Do you study these things?" and in that precise moment Violeta noticed the value Nicanor was placing on the popular poetry. Violeta went out for a moment and returned with several sheets on which Violeta had written down verses. Quickly, Violeta said to Nicanor that the popular poetry he was studying consisted of songs sung by drunken men in their home town, Chillán. Soon after that, recalled Nicanor, Violeta learned the Canto a lo Poeta. Did Violeta write about this in *Centésimas*?

Excerpt from *Centésimas*

...
Seiscientos versos listitos
en seis horas cuando mucho
hice correr el serrucho
por todos sus dientecitos,
el seso lo tengo frito,
me suena como campana,
me canta como una rana,
la juerza me dejó sola,
mi cabeza es una bola
que rueda por la ventana.

Imprento la despedida
con un cansancio profano
para entregarle a mi hermano
las *décimas* escribedas
cansada y muy afligida
saludo con emoción
con todo mi corazón
al que resiste con calma
la centésima del alma
que me salió de un 'tirón'.

Six hundred verses ready
In six hours at most
I used the saw
For all his little teeth,
I have the brain fried,
Sounds to me like a bell,
Sings like a frog,
The force left me alone,
My head is a ball
Which rolls out the window.

I print out the farewell
With profane weariness
To give to my brother
The *décimas* written
Tired and very distressed
Greeting with emotion
With all my heart
To who resist with calm
The centésima of the soul
Which came out quickly.

⁵¹ In the book *Conversaciones con la poesía chilena: Nicanor Parra, Eduardo Anguita, Gonzalo Rojas, Enrique Lihn, Oscar Hahn, Raúl Zurita*, Nicanor (Piña, 1990, p. 24) says returned to Chile in 1952 from England.

(Parra, 2014i)

Although my purpose here is not to identify the exact moment when and how Violeta decided to research oral Chilean traditions, the lack of clarity must be highlighted as well as the need for its investigation, as Nicanor's claims about the moment Violeta started to research exemplifies the uncertainty.⁵² There are significant differences in dates between Violeta's relatives regarding key moments of Violeta's life that make it very difficult to establish a chronological sequence. As there is no agreement on a verifiable date when Parra started to investigate Chilean folklore, I would suggest considering Parra's personal life because there were some very significant events in this regard that do have verifiable dates. For example, the years when Parra presumably started to research coincide with the years she divorced Luis Cereceda in 1948 and married her second husband, Luis Arce, in 1953 (Parra, 2006, p. 52). Furthermore, it is claimed that Parra gave birth to Carmen Luisa on 26 August 1950 (Ibid. p. 55), and Rosita Clara on 22 September 1954 (Sáez, 1999, p. 87). These dates also coincide with the moment Parra dissolved the 'Parra Sisters duo', around 1953 (Navasal, 1954, p. 18). In order to contrast Nicanor's claims, it is worth including Violeta's own, here, in a recorded interview given in Switzerland before returning to Chile in 1965. She was asked in French: "have you travelled through your country to find popular songs?", and she answered: "yes, for fifteen years (Parra, 2014k, track 3). On the other hand, in the introduction to her album *La Cueca presentada por Violeta Parra*, she says in Spanish:

Now that we are going to talk about the 'cueca', I would like to tell you that from the year '53 until today I could realize that the Chilean cueca is not only this cueca we have always heard through the radio, whether sung by me or by other singers. [...] I could not imagine that, when I went to collect my first song one day in 1953 to the Barrancas Commune, I would learn that Chile is the best book of folklore ever written. When I appeared in the 'Comuna de Barrancas' to talk to Mrs. Rosa Lorca, it seemed to open this book. [...] I could continue to tell many things about my adventures looking for the Chilean cueca, but I think it is better to tell you by singing them. (Parra, 2014j, track 1)

This statement is quite ambiguous because it seems to imply that Parra had been researching folk song since 1953. But it may also refer to the time she has been collecting cuecas for this album. So, I do underscore these contradictions between what has been said to construct Parra's biography and what Parra has herself declared. Parra claims

⁵² Nicanor also differs when asked the year his sister first arrived to Santiago declaring it was in 1935 while Parra's daughter claims it was in 1932 (Morales, 2003, p. 68; Parra, 2011, p. 225). It is very difficult to identify the exact date when Parra started to investigate Chilean folklore, or when she was told to research it, in order to clarify this significant moment, and its implications, because everybody says a different year between 1951 and 1953.

she started, at least as early as 1950. This is supported by Parra's children, among others, who also claim that it was in 1950 when Nicanor suggested Violeta start her investigation, and write her autobiography - as Nicanor showed Violeta the epic poem *Martín Fierro* (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1988, p. 15; A. Parra, 2006, p. 70; Parra, 2011, p. 52). We can find more statements by Parra that suggest other perspectives, while at the same time raising more questions about when and how she started to research. For example, further evidence comes from Parra's discography. Although most of Parra's early recordings on EP have no date of publication, some collectors offer dates by comparing them with other records such as the online library created in Sweden by Hannes Salo (Cancioneros, 2015). This comprehensive online database dates Parra's first recording titled 'RCA Victor 90-1219 (Hermanas Parra) [1952]' in 1952, containing the song 'En el Norte' [in the north] [track 11] whose lyrics, by Parra, clearly express the will to promote Chilean cultural values by singing the *cueca* and the *tonada* all over the country.

En el Norte (In the north)

Ando de aquí para allá Diciendo que soy chilena Ando de aquí para allá Divulgando nuestra cueca. Ando de aquí para allá, Represento la tonada. Ando de aquí para allá, La trilla corrida en vaca	I go from here to there Saying I'm Chilean I go from here to there Promoting our cueca I go from here to there I perform the tonada I go from here to there The threshing with cow
Fui un cantar a la Pampa La canción de nuestra tierra La canté en Potrerillos, Pampa Unión, María Elena. De nuestra tierra, ay sí. Allá por Antofagasta Baila ahora un rotito Al hijo de nuestra guitarra	I went to sing to the Pampa The song of our land I sang it in Potrerillos, Pampa Unión, María Elena. From our land, 'ay sí' There in Antofagasta a 'rotito' is now dancing to the son of our guitar
Si cantar es mi lema, Viva la cueca chilena (Parra, 2014h, track 5)	If singing is my motto, Long live the Chilean cueca.

Thus, here we have one of the earliest pieces of documented evidence of Parra's awareness of Chilean folk song as a source of knowledge and tradition. Unfortunately, we cannot establish the date, or whether it was published or created before the 1950s, so the evidence is incomplete. Violeta and Nicanor shared many moments after that

meeting narrated by Nicanor;⁵³ in fact they even shared a home where they lived together before Nicanor travelled to study at Oxford in 1949, and published *Poemas y Antipoemas* (Kerschen, 2010, p. 50; Oviedo, 1990, p. 39; Montealegre, 2011, p. 21; Parra, 2011, p. 52). Although Nicanor never said he accompanied his sister on her research travels, Violeta herself declared many times that she was mostly accompanied by Nicanor, and Angel (Parra, 2013, p. 13). However, putting aside the contradictions, what interests me most is to put into perspective these two key new concepts by the siblings. Nicanor's *Poemas y Antipoemas* is published in 1954, three years before Violeta published the first two anticuecas in *Composiciones para guitarra* (1957b). These two works represent a new form of expression based on thoroughly popular elements. Accordingly, we can synthesize key points that Nicanor used as core for his antipoetry. Firstly, *Poemas y Antipoemas* depicts the way he incorporates, learns and recreates modern poetry in a critical and provocative style, which had started with the influence of Garcia Lorca. Secondly, he posits an alternative form of poetry by using the popular tradition of orality as a literary reference. Thus, he proposed an unofficial poetry to challenge and refresh the official poetry realm. The literary tradition of rural Chile is used here for writing a new type of poetry. *Poemas y Antipoemas* was a compendium of texts written over several years; it was not conceived from the beginning, nor was it intended as a theoretical framework. As he declared:

Poems and Antipoems was baptized a posteriori. I began writing the book in 1938, but I came across the title in England in 1949 or 50. I was walking through a bookstore and noticed the book *A-poemes* by the French poet Henri Pichette. So the word 'anti-poem' had already been used in the nineteenth century, though probably even the Greeks had used it. In any case, the term came to me a posteriori; that is, I didn't write the work with a completely articulate theory in mind from the beginning. (Lerzundi, 1971, p. 65).

In fact, Nicanor (Piña, 1990, p. 29) acknowledges he did not have the literary background of a traditional poet in the 1940s, as Nicanor was too busy studying physics to educate himself thoroughly about poetry and so was not familiar with poets such as Rimbaud or Baudelaire. Nicanor also acknowledges the influence of his knowledge of physics on *Poemas y Antipoemas* because of the presence of concepts such as 'plus' and 'minus', positive and negative charge, a thing and its opposite (Piña, 1990, p. 30). Nicanor (Ibid.) argues that the modernist poets of the first half of the twentieth century were believed to be in possession of a truth and then became very authoritarian because

⁵³ Fernando Sáez (2017 p. 36) claims that Parra usually shared weekends with her brother Nicanor's group with the poet Jorge Millas (1917-1982) and the painter Carlos Pedraza (1913-2000), where they talked about literature, and art in general, managing to publish a magazine with his poems and drawings where they worked - the Barros Arana National Boarding School.

they were alienated in a poetic space outside of everyday life: he (N. Parra, 1969, p. 211) says in his *Manifiesto*, “Ladies and Gentlemen [...] the poets descended from Olympus. / For the elders / Poetry was an object of luxury / But for us / It is an article of prime necessity. [...] Unlike the elders / We argue / That the poet is not an alchemist / The poet is a man like everybody / A mason who builds his wall: / A builder of doors and windows”. Nicanor (Piña, 1990, p. 33) has declared many times that what we now know as antipoetry is mainly derived from his intuitive motivation to make something different to that modern poetry of his times, as epitomized by Pablo Neruda, where poets were considered as priests, as intermediaries between this world and the next.

But in postmodernism, it is a question of assuming the precariousness and crisis of that thought, where the poet is an ordinary man, from the street, a mason who builds his wall. So I do not like the word creator because it is considered a God, and I prefer the man of flesh and bone, as it happens in concrete reality. In antipoetry he is not endowed with supernatural powers: I am inspired by conversations, not prayers. The antipoem is not a prayer. It's a dramatic parliament. If a line can be used in a conversation, it fits into a poem, that is, it enters into everydayity. (Piña, 1990, p. 35)

Many years later, after the publication of *Poemas y Antipoemas*, Nicanor described the context in which he started to write antipoems which came to public attention against his wishes because he felt they still needed to be improved. But more interestingly, Nicanor points out something very relevant to his sister's artwork; to consider the “capacity of ignorance” about official art as possibility, as a generator, or as a fertile space for creativity:

I had little time to read poetry, so it is not uncommon for me to have almost never departed from any established frame of [poetical] reference, the fact that I left the modernist approaches, without proposing it, is also due to this ignorance. What I had read had no comparison with the writers who were at that time, who read a lot. But if I had formed in a conventional way I think I would have stuck in [the poetry of] Rubén Darío ... [So] there was no other alternative than the spoken language. ... I was struck by one thing when reading poetry of the time. For me, poets should have spoken as ordinary people do. I picked it up in the air and it became a postulate: I told myself that I had to express myself in the language of the tribe; that the language of the tribe should be the language of poetry. (Piña, 1990, pp. 29-30)

Nicanor points out something very similar here to what he said about his sister not knowing Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* or other famous works. Can we say that Violeta's ‘ignorance’, and illiteracy, allowed her to be original, and to create a new art form just as Nicanor's ignorance of traditional poetry had facilitated his own innovative interventions?



Figure 38, Parra and daughter Isabel dressed up as 'Violeta de Mayo' and 'Chabelita' as Spanish music and dance performers.

A Correlation?

Likewise, we can observe similar stages in Violeta Parra's production. From 1935 to 1957 (Navasal, 1954, p. 18), Parra incorporated, learned and recreated the Spanish forms (between 1935-1945), and then Chilean folk forms (around 1945-1956), even winning a competition in the former [Figure 38], then promoting and recording the latter, to finally create/compose a new artistic form based on existing tradition. Having learned fandangos, farrucas and coplas, Parra turned to performing cuecas, tonadas, mazurkas, Canto a lo Poeta, waltzes, in both vocal and instrumental versions. In 1953, Parra appeared twice in one of the most popular magazines of the time; *Ecran* was intended to be the Hollywood film industry window in Chile, but its popularity meant that many other artistic figures were featured in it. The first short article, titled 'Does a new folkloric value arise? Violeta Parra, composer and singer' (ECRAN, 1953a), introduces this new folk singer who was strongly recommended by the renowned folk singer Margot Loyola as performer and composer of the traditional folk song 'cueca'. Loyola (ECRAN, 1953a, p. 19) highlights Parra's poetical and compositional skills in writing folk songs but also remarks on her dancing and playing the guitar in the same way as people do in rural

areas of Chile, because she learned it in Chillán, where she was born, and started to create songs at the age of eleven. The article points out that Parra has composed thirty songs which Loyola is going to 'write' because Parra does not know how to write music. The next short article, titled 'Violeta Parra and the Folklore' (ECRAN, 1953b) published on 22nd December, now presents the singer Parra as a researcher who is going to present a thirty-minute radio programme every Thursday, starting in January 1954, to promote and disseminate rural customs of Chile as well as her own compositions, at Radio Chilena. The first programme presented a traditional event from the Ñuble province – where she was born – called 'La Cruz de Mayo' [the cross of May], where devotees parade the Catholic cross of Christ singing and reciting verses in 'a lo divino' style. Parra was going to talk about and describe all the traditional events she learned and witnessed such as rural weddings, baptisms, the threshing, Independence Day, Easter, grape harvest, baby's wake, among others, and also explain and perform the dances and songs of rural areas of the province.

The next year, Parra seems to have achieved more of a reputation as a folklorist because *Ecran* devotes an entire page to the article 'Meet Violeta Parra' (Navasal, 1954) in which she fully explains her art. This time she is presented as the sister of the popular poet Nicanor and, again, as a researcher of folk song:

Between the years 1935 and 1945 I learned to sing the Spanish genre. [...] My interest in the Spanish folklore was motivated by my older brother, and I even won a contest, in 1944, as the best interpreter of that genre. After ten years singing commercial songs, my sister Hilda and I formed the Hermanas Parra duo. We performed - interpreting Chilean folk [...] and also recorded original songs that I created for RCA Victor. In October of 1953 Hilda and I broke up [...] [I learned our folklore] since I was born ... In Malloa, near Chillan. [...] I have sixty original compositions. Some of them are 'commercial', according to the criteria of recording companies. The most popular - although I do not like it - is the guaracha "El Funicular". In the serious genre I have folkloric tunes. Waltzes, etc. I write the music and the lyrics. (Navasal, 1954, p. 18)

This interview provides dates specifying when Parra started singing Spanish music, when she turned to the duet with her sister, and when those duets ended. On the other hand, how and when she started this new work as a researcher is not mentioned, apart from having said it was Nicanor who motivated her research into Spanish folklore. Furthermore, it raises, again, more questions than answers. For example, Violeta declares the song 'El Funicular' to be the most popular of her repertoire, yet it does not appear in any available discography. Lacking verifiable data regarding the moment Parra effectively started to research, I shall focus on the dates of publishing of these artworks by Violeta and Nicanor.



Figure 39, Violeta Parra, 1957, *Composiciones para guitarra*, EP, ODEON.

Later, in 1957, she recorded the EP album *Composiciones para guitarra* [Figure 39] which features the first two anticuecas among other titles. In the next chapter I am going to focus on these new pieces for solo guitar that remained lost and completely hidden for several years until they finally resurfaced in the 1990s. Overall, it is apparent from the verifiable chronology that Parra took the word ‘anti’ from her brother’s ‘antipoems’. It seems that, by doing this, she was trying to trace a parallel between Nicanor’s use of poetry from rural areas to create a more ‘Chilean’ modern poetry and the use of music from rural areas to create a more – authentic - ‘Chilean’ modern music. If Nicanor’s antipoetry has been included within the tradition of the rupture that characterizes the vanguards of modernity of the twentieth century, can we think of Violeta’s anticuecas in the same way – as an (anti)poetical reaction within the hegemonic musical conventions?

Thus, it is possible to see how Violeta apparently followed Nicanor’s suggestions to use her knowledge of the culture of their hometown to develop her own artistic

language in the same way as her brother had. But, it was not until the 1990s when the siblings' artistic relationship started to be addressed. Literary scholar Fidel Sepúlveda (1991, p. 41) notes that Nicanor, Violeta and Roberto show clear poetical similarities. These are based on the orality of the popular culture of the peasant, urban and contemporary suburban peoples of Chile, which is used in the Parras' artworks to help construct a new paradigm:

The work of the three siblings carries out a double operation: 1. Displacement of the periphery, from the marginal to the center. Roberto, the suburb, the underworld. Violeta, the traditional peasant. Nicanor, popular peasant and urban. 2. Displacement from the center to the periphery. Pseudo socio-cultural values. Pseudo religious values. Pseudo artistic values. (Sepúlveda, 1991, p. 42)

Music scholar Christian Spencer (2000) approached the folkloric and idiomatic features of the anticuecas, claiming that that Parra's use of accents obscures the pulse; disfiguring part of the stability of the rhythm through the repetition of musical phrases based on small rhythmic cells, as her brother did with the antipoems. Spencer (2000, p. 9) devotes a footnote to argue that Parra's attitude of rejection towards the traditional musical forms of the time might be due to the influence of her brother Nicanor's "rejection of traditional poetry that sought the exaltation of one's own point of view". More recently, music scholar Jorge Martínez (2013, p. 256) argues that both Nicanor and Violeta, in poetry and music respectively, move from the dominant space of their own genres to the opposite, causing a rupture and negation which explains the prefix 'anti', in a similar vein to Sepúlveda's argument. Martínez concludes that this new poetical concept labelled as 'anti' is made through an inverted movement because Nicanor, on the one hand, achieved 'antipoetry' in moving from modern poetry to popular poetry, and on the other hand, Violeta achieved anticuecas in moving from popular music to a type of 'art music' for solo guitar.

As mentioned before, Nicanor wrote a poem dedicated to his sister titled 'In Defence of Violeta Parra' whose literary elements are worth brief explication here for the further understanding of Violeta's artistic language. They are also worth consideration because of the similarities in their artistic development as I have discussed previously, and for reasons I will be arguing for in the next section. First published in Argentina, the poem was part of the book *La Cueca Larga* (1958), containing sixteen stanzas, the last of which breaks this structure with one of a greater number of verses, even though some stanzas are fragmented or scattered, but still maintaining its structure (Santana, 2006, p. 24). Yet, an earlier version appears in the catalogue for her Louvre exhibition, this time with fifteen stanzas, the last comprising ten verses, translated into French (Brunhammer, 1964, pp. 3-4). In 1965, Violeta included the track 'Defensa de Violeta Parra' on her

album *Recordando a Chile* (EMI-ODEON), in which she plays the 'Tema libre No. 2' while Nicanor recites the poem [track 13]. In 1969, Nicanor published an extended version of this poem, after his sister's death, in *Obra gruesa* (Parra, 1969, pp. 219-223), maintaining the same structure and encompassing a total of thirty-one stanzas [Appendix 21]. Elvira Santana (2006) researches the intertextuality as well as the metrical similarity between Nicanor's poem and Esteban Manuel de Villegas's 'Ode to Zephyr' from the latter's collection *Eróticas o Amatorias* (1618), stating that Parra uses the Adonic and Sapphic stanza to establish a traditional structure, resulting in an antipoem whose formal model dates back to Greek antiquity, resurrected in the Renaissance and still valid today:

Excerpt from 'Oda al Céfiro' [Ode to Zephyr]

Dulce vecino de la verde selva,
huésped eterno del abril florido,
vital aliento de la madre Venus,
Céfiro blando.

(Santana, 2006, p. 35)

*Sweet neighbor of the green jungle,
Eternal guest of Flowery April,
Vital breath of the mother Venus,
Soft Zephyr.*

So what do we have in this poem? Firstly, Nicanor is making the case for the artistic merits of his sister who suffered indifference and undervaluation in Chile, mainly from the elite and the institutions they managed, which resulted in few opportunities for developing her art. Secondly, Nicanor chose an ancient Greek lyric verse to identify and establish the artistic value of the figure of his sister. As we can see in Villegas' ode, a Sapphic stanza consists of four verses; the first three are Sapphic hendecasyllables and the fourth dactylic pentasyllables, generally called Adonic (Ibid., p. 40). In doing so, Nicanor also vindicates the popular and folkloric forms by using antipoetic devices such as by breaking with some aspects of this ancient literary form. For example, in the second stanza, Nicanor breaks down the Sapphic stanza because the hendecasyllable has been fragmented into three poetic lines; and also creates a different rhythm from the accentuation of words, which we could call an antimetrical rhythm (ibid.). This is the way in which Nicanor's antipoetry works: on the disarticulation of the metric of a Classical model, the results, from the point of view of its metric structure, being built on the "demolition" of a very long metric tradition (ibid.). Also, in what is probably the most antipoetical device, Nicanor changes the traditional lyrical tone of the stanza in the lines, 'When it comes to dancing the 'cueca' / nobody can escape from your guitar', to break this seriousness of Villegas' 'Ode to Zephyr' for a colloquial and conversational exclamation: 'Even the dead go out dancing / a waltz-cueca' (Ibid., p. 38). It seems to be

that this poem provides a fertile space for questions. Is Nicanor offering clues about how to read Parra's art?⁵⁴

Excerpt from 'Defense of Violeta Parra'

Sweet neighbor of green jungles
eternal guest of flowering spring
sworn enemy of the brambleberry
Violeta Parra.

From out of Chilian with your pottery and stitchery
dancer on transparent water
tree nester full of songbirds
Violeta Parra.

You've wandered far and wide
in search of buried earthenware
liberating captive birds
amid the branches.

Always looking out for others
(here a nephew, there an aunt)
when will you give a thought to yourself
Violeta Heart-of-Gold?

Cook, nanny, washerwoman,
maid of all work,
all the colors of the sunset
Violeta Parra.

Mountain blossom, seagull of the lakelands
no adjective is strong enough
no noun is strong enough
to name you.

But bureaucrats don't like you
they lock you out of your house
they wage all-out war against you
Violeta Parra.

Because you don't buy or sell yourself
because you won't play the clown
because you speak the people's language
Violeta Chileansis.

⁵⁴ Villegas also wrote a satiric text titled *Antiteatro* (1646-1649) in which criticizes humorous poets and performances (Vega, 1993).

How could they ever love you
 those shriveled-up little clerks
 as gray as the sands of the desert
 don't you see?

But you, Violeta of the Andes
 flower of the coastal range
 are an ever-flowing wellspring
 of human life.
 Your heart grows soft when it cares to
 your will grows hard when it cares to
 and your health when it cares to fight its way
 upstream.

You have only to speak their names
 and the colors and forms
 arise and walk like Lazarus
 in body and soul.

No one can complain when you
 sing whisper soft or scream
 like your throat's being cut
 Viola Volcano Woman.

Everyone should lapse into
 profound religious silence
 because your song knows where it's going perfectly.

That's all I meant to tell you
 keep on weaving your crafts
 your Araucanian ponchos
 your Quinchamali earthenware
 keep on polishing night and day
 your flutes of sacred wood,
 ungrieving, without useless tears,
 or if you like, with burning tears
 and remember what you are:
 a little lamb in wolf's clothing.
 (Lindstrom, 1981, pp. 88-89)



Figure 40, Violeta and Nicanor Parra at La Carpa de la Reina, circa 1966.

Although Violeta seems to have had good relationships with all her siblings, her closeness to Nicanor seems to stand out, in their shared interests and the value they placed on the everyday life of rural Chile, such as enjoying the magic simplicity of a “glass of wine”, to quote Nicanor’s verse [Figure 40]. Both antipoems and anticuecas represent comparable stages of artistic development by their authors. For example, in the first stage, both brother and sister learn and incorporate Spanish art forms into their activities, leading to a second stage in which each author creates their own art forms based on the modern art forms of the time. They assimilate these Chilean forms and realize, after investigation, that there are rural folk practices that, let us say, have remained almost unknown to the official urbanized – mass - culture since colonization. The third, and final, stage is the moment in which they adopt a critical stance and decide to use these unofficial practices to challenge the prevailing trends in the official urbanized – mass - culture. In this third stage, therefore, appear the ‘postmodernist’ artforms such as those with the prefix ‘anti’, in Nicanor’s words, and the song ‘La cueca larga’ to call attention to the elements and practices characteristic of rural Chile, with evident transversal implications. Specifically, the Parra’s learned and took the cultural practices developed by the ordinary people as an artistic framework for their own poetics. This will

be explored in the following sections, which will outline the forms, structures, organization, etc., that she learned from the rural cultures she researched and collected.

Literary Language: Décimas and Centésimas

According to Isabel (Parra, 2011, p. 227), Violeta started to engage with the literature world because of the guide role played by Nicanor who introduced her to many artists and writers in Chile such as Pablo Neruda, who invited her to his home in 1953 for a meeting with friends. But it was in 1958 when she was invited to participate in the second meeting of writers in Concepción; in that year Parra took the satiric nine-syllable poem 'Satire to the Rhyme' by Chilean poet Gonzalo Rojas (1916-2011) to sing with her Chilean 'guitarrón' [Appendix 1].

Still, there is uncertainty over when Parra started and finished writing her autobiography in *décimas* as well as the 'Centésimas', but some agree they were probably finished around 1958 (Morales, 2003, p. 54; Parra, 2011, p. 227). *Décimas: Autobiografía en Verso* was published posthumously in 1970 by the Pomaire publishers in Chile. Violeta acknowledged Nicanor as the one who motivated her to write her autobiography in the 'décima II' by using the popular verse after showing her "a famous poet" (Parra, 1998, p. 6). According to literary scholar Naomi Lindstrom (1985) Parra's *Décimas* address significant issues in a pioneering way, such as feminism, indigenous rights, cultural and colonial criticism. However, it became the political tone which would become the model for the next generations both in music and literature, the Chilean New Song movement being but one example. Leonidas Morales (2003, p. 53) points out that Parra was asked to narrate her life in the same way as some authors wrote 'Life Stories' in Latin America during the colonization period - such as the Chilean nun Úrsula Suárez' biography (1666-1749) - that were also very popular during the Spanish medieval period as 'requested narrations', such as the popular (and anonymous) *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Excerpt from 'Décima II'

Muda, triste y pensativa
ayer me dejó mi hermano
cuando me habló de un fulano
muy famoso en poesía.
Fue grande sorpresa mía
cuando me dijo: "Violeta,
ya que conocís la treta
de la versá' popular,
príncipiame a relatar
tus penurias "a lo poeta"".

Mute, sad and thoughtful
My brother left me yesterday
When he told me about a guy
Very famous in poetry.
It was a big surprise.
When he told me: "Violeta
Since you know the way
Of popular verse,
Start telling me
Your hardships in 'a lo poeta' style".

Válgame Dios, Nicanor,
 si tengo tanto trabajo,
 que ando de arriba p'abajo
 desenterrando folklor.
 No sabís cuánto dolor,
 miseria y padecimiento
 me dan los versos qu'encuentro;
 muy pobre está mi bolsillo
 y tengo cuatro chiquillos
 a quienes darl' el sustento.

For God's sake, Nicanor
 I have so much work
 I walk from top to bottom
 Unearthing folklore.
 You do not know how much pain,
 Misery and suffering
 Give me the verses I find;
 Very poor is my pocket
 And I have four kids
 For whom I'm responsible.

[...]

Igual que jardín de flores
 se ven los campos sembra'os
 de versos tan delica'os
 que son perfeutos primores.
 Ellos cantan los dolores,
 llenos de fe y esperanzas;
 algotros piden mudanzas
 de nuestros amargos males;
 fatal entre los fatales
 voy siguiendo estas andanzas.
 (Parra, 1998, pp. 25-26)

Same as flower garden
 You see the fields planted
 Of such delicate verses
 Which are perfect beauties
 They sing the pains
 Full of faith and hope
 Some people are asking for changes
 Of our bitter evils
 Fatal among the fatal
 I'm following these adventures.

Parra's *Décimas* start off with a key idea about the décima tradition; the orality of its practice. Parra says that "to improvise a song requires considerable talent" because it has been extensively developed by popular singers and is aimed to be heard in the same ways as Hernandez's *Martín Fierro* which is narrated by a popular singer, or the singer-poet. At the same time Parra's *Décimas* represent the literary embodiment of popular poetry (Morales, 2003, p. 57). So here we find the particularity and uniqueness of Parra's verbal production which refer to the fact that the poetry in décima were created and practised by cultivated poets from the Spanish - official - tradition which after colonization became part of the unwritten culture of the rural areas of Latin America, the unofficial.

A significant point made by many authors is the fact that Parra's *Décimas* narrates her childhood and adolescence by making reference constantly to a significant social event that shaped her life and the lives of many; Chilean industrialization (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1992; Canales, 2005; Miranda, 2000; Morales, 2003; Vilches, 2008). Many peasants had to move from the countryside to urbanized areas to work and live in a polarized context - with both poor and rich people - which meant losing moral and cultural values of rural traditions. Thus, in *Décimas*, Parra conveys the conflicting relationship between the urban and the folkloric cultures through an unequal dialogue that is heart-rending. This is further investigated by literary scholar Patricia Vilches (2008, p. 75), claiming that throughout the 4600 octosyllabic verses, or ninety-two décimas,

Parra bears testimony to the violence generated by the capitalist society and its liberal policies that had turned from European to USA influence and ideology during the governments of Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, between 1927-1931 and 1952-1958, and Arturo Alessandri Palma, between 1920-1925 and 1932-1938. This is clear in the second *décima* where the countryside paradise, home of the ancestral poetic tradition, is slowly 'devoured' culturally and economically by modernity.

Excerpt from 'Decima VII'

Por ese tiempo, el destino
se descargó sobre Chile:
cayeron miles y miles
por causa de un hombre indino.
Explica el zorro ladino
que busca la economía,
y siembra la cesantía,
según él lo considera,
manchando nuestra bandera
con sangre y alevosía.

By that time, fate
Knocked Chile:
Thousands and thousands fell
Because of an unworthy man.
Explains the rogue fox
that seeks to economize,
And sows unemployment,
As he thinks of it,
Staining our flag
With blood and treachery.

Fue tanta la dictadura
que practicó este malvado,
que sufrí el profesorado
la más feroz quebradura.
Hay multa por la basura,
multa si salen de noche,
multa por calma o por boche,
cambió de nombre a los pacos;
prenden a gordos y a flacos,
así no vayan en coche.
(Parra, 1998, p. 73)

The dictatorship was so hard
That practised this evil one,
That those teachers suffer
The fiercest crack.
There is a fine for the garbage,
Fine if they go out at night,
Fine for calm or for noise,
changed the name of the police;
jail for fat and skinny men,
if they do not go by car.

These socio-political issues were conveyed by echoing two popular practices throughout Chile between the nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century: 'La Lira Popular' and El Canto a lo Poeta. The former refers to the piles of poetry, in *décima*, that were printed and distributed during the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century in Chile [Appendix 22]. Popular poets mainly from the working class published their poems facilitated by the printing presses, corresponding to an old style that came to South-America through Spanish colonization (Manns, 1977, p. 51; Lenz, 1894, p. 569; Uribe-Echevarría, 1974b, p. 16). According to Micaela Navarrete (1999), in Spain it was known as 'Hanging literature' because the vendors displayed them in horizontal rows, attached to ropes. The text of these prints was produced by many authors and transmitted in sung or recited form, accessible to large numbers of people, presented on low-priced paper, and included illustrations to facilitate understanding of the text. Although the date at which this literature started to be published in Chile is unclear, some

say it could have started after the independence process when the first examples came to public attention in 1866 at travelling fairs, and after the Pacific War in 1879 (Memoriachilena, 2017). The German scholar Rodolfo Lenz was the first to study and collect these printed sheets that comprise 450 examples of 'Liras Populares'.

According to folk scholar and popular singer Francisco Astorga (2000, p. 56), the Canto a lo Poeta is sung poetry, very popular in central Chile, that primarily uses the literary meter of quatrains and/or décimas to sing melodies called 'entonaciones' in a recitative style that is accompanied by the Chilean 'guitarrón'. It is divided into two main groups: 'canto a lo divino' which features sacred verses, and 'canto a lo humano', its secular equivalent, and it dates to the time of the Conquest (sixteenth century). The former comes from the first Jesuit missionaries that taught the indigenous population the Christian doctrine through verse, including biblical or religious topics, i.e. the creation of the world, the birth and life of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Saints, Salomon, and so forth. The Canto a lo Humano, on the other hand, comes from Spanish troubadours and minstrels who made up profane texts from the religious texts maintaining the same musical and literary style. Its themes were very broad: verses of love, weddings, political events, patriotic verses, tragedies, misfortunes, crimes and executions, earthquakes and catastrophes, counterpoints, weights, literature, history, astronomy and mythology. Its main literary feature is that it is structured by using the décima style - five stanzas with ten verses of eight syllables (Soubllette, 1962, p. 49). Musically, the melodies used for singing are called 'entonaciones', which have different features throughout Chile, and the instrument that accompanies the song is strummed and/or a dotted touch is used: the three-stringed *rabel* which resembles a violin – and the 25-stringed, guitar-like *guitarrón* (Astorga, 2000, pp. 59-60). Thus, at some stage, probably during the sixteenth century, the poetic tradition had begun to be sung, giving rise to the Chilean Canto a lo Poeta, sung poetry, which is one of the most important genres of rural culture in Chile because "conveys the poet's holistic view of world" (Dannemann, 1998, p. 64). In the interview for *Revista Musical Chilena* (Vicuña, 1958), Parra discusses various types of folk song but emphasises the Canto a lo Divino, describing this strong religious element in folk music as surprising. Parra herself explained what she had learned about this form in the interview for *Ecran* in 1954, saying that the first folk genre she learned was the 'paya' or 'palla', a Quechua word that means 'two', which is part of the Canto a lo Humano practice, in which one poet starts by improvising in quarter-verses, rhyming the second and the fourth lines, to which his opponent must respond in the same form.

-Which genre did you first compose?

The 'pallas'. I have the ability to improvise, but I find it easier to write. I have written two hundred and forty verses on all sorts of things. The couplet has to be witty, funny, and its verses can be recited or chanted.

-Is the tradition of 'palladores' kept in rural areas?

I think so, and the popular poets are as famous and widely quoted as the old ones. The palladores are proud and each one is considered better than the others; therefore, the competition of 'pallas' is a real struggle of wit. One of the most famous palladores was Xavier de la Rosa, who competed against the Mulato Taguada. There have been few female "palladoras". Perhaps the best known is Rosita Araneda (Navasal, 1954, p. 18).

Interestingly, Parra is making the same reference as her brother had about the two popular singers when asked about the tradition of the 'paya' [track 12]—'El Mulato Taguada y Xavier de la Rosa, and she adds that "an eighty-year-old man who lives in Barrancas taught me how to play the guitarron"(Ibid.). As I mentioned, Jorge Edwards similarly stated that he witnessed meetings with a man who played the guitarron. Can we say that when Parra declares "I have written two hundred and forty verses on all sorts of things", she is referring to the same verses that Nicanor mentioned?

Parra clarified [track 14] that while researching oral traditional customs she found there were décimas that narrated from one to ten, and that she thought she could expand that idea, and decided to create her 'Centésimas' [hundredth], and after completion she was going to follow that with the 'milésima' [thousandths]. Curiously, Parra's Centésimas has not been published in a book yet. However, we know of its existence because it was edited on a CD, *Centésimas del Alma* (Parra, 2014i), in which Parra explains and premiers her own poetical works. Therefore, we know these Centésimas because they were taken from a radio interview recorded in 1960 where Parra premiered this new poetical work without musical accompaniment. This CD shows the Centésimas in two tracks, the first with the title "Centésimas del 1 al 100", the second track "Centésimas del 178 al 300". Parra set to music the first four stanzas of these centésimas for her long-player *Toda Violeta Parra* (1961), becoming the song '21 son los dolores' [track 15]. Soubllette (Parra, 1961) explains that the intention of this verse is to list the pains caused by love, belonging to a type of Canto a lo Humano, known as the tenth numerals. Usually these tenths reach number ten; however, Violeta asks: "who prevents me from doing them up to 40,000?". Although there are 300 *centésimas* published, some claim she wrote more than six hundred (Oviedo, 1990, p.74). In fact, Parra's current discography incorporates the album *Violeta Parra, Tita Parra – Centésimas del Alma* where Parra's granddaughter set the centésimas from two hundred forty-three to three hundred titled '600 ready verses' to music (Parra, 2014i, track 11). It is interesting to note that this new poetic form that Parra called Centésimas have been little explored, which is why there is

almost no reference even in the literary studies on Parra. Can these hundreds be relevant for Parra's poetical language?

Excerpt from '21 son los dolores' [21 are the pains]

Una vez que me asediaste
dos juramentos me hiciste,
tres lagrimones vertiste,
cuatro gemidos sacaste,
cinco minutos dudaste,
seis más porque no te vi;
siete pedazos de mí,
ocho razones me aquejan,
nueve mentiras me alejan,
diez que en tu boca sentí.
(Parra, 1993, p. 140)

Once you besieged me
Two oaths thou hast made me,
Three tears you threw away,
Four groanings you took out,
Five minutes you hesitated,
Six more because I did not see you;
Seven pieces of me,
Eight reasons affect me,
Nine lies drive me away,
Ten that I felt in your mouth.

As Parra herself suggests, evidence of numbering in verse as a poetical tool is found already in Parra's research. For example, 'El Primer Día Del Señor' [The First Day of the Lord] [track 16] is a song from the Canto a lo Divino repertoire she recorded in 1955 for the album *Violeta Parra. Cantos Campesinos* (Parra, 2014e, track 1), which she had obtained from Guillermo Reyes, which is written in décimas in four stanzas. Each stanza begins with a day of the lord: "The first day of the Lord...The second day in heaven...The third painful day...The fourth day present" (Parra, 2013, pp. 18-20). It is also present in the tonada 'Los Mandamientos' (Parra, 1999, track 8) [track 17] Parra obtained from Francisca Martínez, which reaches the number five; a similar number structure follows in the song 'Es Aquí o No Es Aquí' (Parra, 2014h, track 10) [track 18] that she obtained from Mercédez Guzmán (Parra, 2013, pp. 61-70). Finally, the song 'Verso por las Doce Palabras' (Parra, 2014f, track 5) [track 19] which uses twelve numbers within five stanzas to sing without accompaniment. Interestingly, this poetical device is also going to be used and developed by Nicanor, as outlined below. In 1958 Nicanor wrote a poem called 'La cueca larga' for his book of collected verse titled with the same name (Parra, 1969, pp. 73-79) in which he used numbering for verses. But more interestingly, both authors would converge artistically in this poem as I will show in the next chapter.

Excerpt from 'La cueca larga'

Cantan los gallos, sí
Vamos en uno
Esta es la cueca larga
De San Beniuno.

The roosters sing, yes
Let's go in one
This is the long cueca
From Saint Beniuno.

[...]

Otro en el cielo, mi alma
 Por un vistazo
 Me pegaba dos tiros
 Y tres balazos.

Another in the sky, my soul
 At a glance
 I hit two shots
 And three bullets.

Me desarmara entero
 Vamos en cuatro
 Hacen cuarenta días
 Que no me encacho.

I disarranged whole
 Let's go in four
 Since forty days
 I do not drink

Que no me encacho, cinco
 Seis, siete, ocho
 Tápate las canillas
 Con un gangocho
 (N. Parra, 1969, pp. 73-79)

I do not drink, five
 Six, seven, eight
 Cover the bobbins
 With a gaggle.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to examine Violeta Parra's artistic background from the literary perspective in comparison to Nicanor's antipoetry by exploring how Violeta's anticuecas may be poetically linked to her brother's; parallel paths which are very difficult to date in Parra's case. Both antipoems and anticuecas can be understood as an attempt to poetically translate Chilean rural customs, specifically those orally transmitted that take the form of sayings, localisms, mannerisms, patterns of speech, lifestyle, and so forth. Specifically, Nicanor's influence over Violeta is manifested in the way both authors took elements from other art forms as references and sources for their poetics. For example, Nicanor made literal references to music in his seminal work *Poemas y Antipoemas*, where he uses words such as 'symphony', 'a piano solo', or even 'madrigal' as titles for his antipoetical poems. In that light, Nicanor's influence over Violeta might be even deeper than is currently thought. For example, we may ask, could Violeta have learned about William Blake through Nicanor when he returned to Chile in 1951 from Oxford where he had learned of the renowned interdisciplinary British artist?

Further interesting evidence on the way Violeta's poetics translation originated and developed is the fact that neither sibling received formal artistic training. For example, Nicanor declared that his ignorance of the literary tradition, as well as his scientific studies, may have played a principal role in developing his antipoetry. Thus, Nicanor placed himself within the tradition of artists who distinguished themselves from what they saw as dominant or fashionable trends. Likewise, Violeta's anticuecas, as well as her poetry and art – deliberately or otherwise – ignored the official modern tradition of her times. This may suggest that Parra's work can be considered in the same light,

discarding for a moment the assumed notions of innocence that have been attached to her artwork. The traditions from which Violeta learned had orality as their key feature. She and Nicanor both taught themselves the Spanish tradition, then reacted to mainstream trends by using poetical and musical elements from rural areas of Chile that dated back to the Spanish medieval period, which Nicanor poetically encoded in his 'Defence of Violeta Parra'.

In this way, we have seen that Parra demonstrated poetical skills long before researching Chilean folklore and writing her autobiography and centésimas. These poetical works are evidence that the most significant elements in Parra's work came from the literary tradition known as *Canto a lo Poeta*; a repertoire in which a skilled poet sings about traditional wisdom using a variety of literary devices and meters. This practice is, in fact, interdisciplinary because the singer must improvise in a given metrical verse, and on the tonality or modality of a musical scale, at the same time as she/he plays the guitar through arpeggiated chords. Thus, we can safely state that popular verse and the *Canto a lo Poeta* repertoire gave Parra her knowledge of literary structures, verse forms, rhymes, meters, and so forth. For example, both Violeta and brother Nicanor show evidence of the literary numbering motif used in the popular literature tradition, as the centésimas and *Cueca Larga* show. Violeta's literary poetics thus translates the Chilean oral unofficial culture. Once again, the very nature of her practice of poetical translation is clear from the literary perspective, as evidenced by her autobiography:

Excerpt from 'Décima II'

igual que jardín de flores
se ven los campos sembrados
de versos tan delicados
que son perfectos primores;
ellos cantan los dolores
llenos de fe y esperanzas;
algunos piden mudanzas
de nuestros amargos males;
fatal entre los fatales
voy siguiendo estas andanzas.
(Parra, 1998, p. 26)

alike the flower garden
are seen the seeded fields
of such delicate verses
that are perfect finesse;
they sing the pains
full of faith and hope;
Some ask for changes
of our bitter evils;
fatal among the fateful
I keep going on these adventures.

Chapter IV

Musical Poetics

So talk to me Bio-Bio [river],
 Yours are the words that
 Roll off my tongue, you gave me
 Language, the nocturnal song
 Fused with rain and foliage.
 You, when no one would heed a child,
 Told me about the dawning
 Of the earth, the powerful peace
 Of your kingdom, the hatchet buried
 With a quiver of lifeless arrows,
 All that the leaves of the cinnamon laurel
 have told you for a thousand of years –
 And then I saw you embrace the sea,
 Dividing into mouths and breasts,
 Wide and flowering, murmuring
 A tale the color of blood.

Pablo Neruda
Canto General

CUECA

Having analysed the literary foundation of Violeta Parra's poetics, we can move on to analyse the third poetical language she used for interdisciplinary purposes: music. Accordingly, in this chapter, I shall continue to explore the intellectual relationship between Violeta and Nicanor Parra, specifically by analysing the importance and connections of popular music practices such as the *Canto a lo Poeta*, in shaping and thematizing Parra's musical interdisciplinarity. Thus, Violeta and Nicanor discovered they had a profound interrelationship with that oral culture, *emic*, unlike most of the scholars and artists who researched and promoted it, *etic*, who were not from rural areas as they were.⁵⁵ So it was very easy for them to find and use the most practised forms of songs and poetry. One of these is the *cueca* which is practised in South American countries such as Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia. Although its origin is unclear it is thought to derive from the *zamacueca*,⁵⁶ which arose in Peru as a local version of Spanish fandango music in colonial times by Creoles and African slaves (Claro Valdés et al., 1994; Garrido, 1976; Loyola and Cádiz V, 2010; Loyola, 1999).⁵⁷

The *cueca*'s text comprises three parts: an octosyllabic quatrain, a *seguidilla* (eight verses with the syllabic pattern 7–5–7–5 and assonantal rhyme on the second and fourth lines), and two rhymed verses called *pareado* or *remate*. Musically, it has a binary rhythm of six-eight alternating with three-four (hemiola) in an allegro tempo suited to energetic dancing. Its formal structure begins with an instrumental introduction; next, the first stanza features two musical periods of one antecedent and two consequents each (abbabb) for the quatrain in which the second and the fourth verses are sung twice. Then the phrasing structure follows with two motives (antecedent and consequent) or slightly longer melodies; using the antecedent for the seven-syllable verse (a) and the consequent for the five-syllable verse (b) which is repeated just once (abbab). Finally, the coda (c) is sung with the two lines of seven and five verses, mainly of comic

⁵⁵ Gastón Soublette (Parra, 2013, p. 10) points out that “It is true that Violeta Parra was preceded by renowned anthropologists such as Ramón Laval, Rodolfo Lenz and others, who with admirable dedication collected much of what I call 'the spoken text' of our people, although with a preferential emphasis on the word and little interest in the music as well as in the singing and use of the instrument. [...] But these works were archived for many decades, as memories of a time when providence saved the big work of our intangible heritage.”

⁵⁶ An early nineteenth-century example of the *zamacueca* by Federico Guzmán (1827 - 1885) titled 'Zamacueca number 3' [track 20].

⁵⁷ Since the return to democracy in Chile in the 1990s, there has been a growing bibliography dealing with the different types, practices, places and cultural development of the *cueca*, mainly developed in urbanized areas, in particular the very popular '*cueca brava*', or '*cueca chora*', among others, and that is currently known as 'urban folklore' (Muñoz and Padilla, 2008; Spencer, 2011; Oteiza A and Martínez, 2016).

character, in which an allusion to the dancers and singers is made. Yet, the cueca's text must be synced with musical meter to be sung. So, to fit the literary verse into the musical one, filler words must be added that take the name of refrains and are well known to the public, such as "vida" [life], "mi vida" [my life], "Si ay ay ay" [yes, ay ay ay], "negrito" [little black kid], "caramba", etc. Second, the number of syllables is increased to fill the entire phrase [Example 1]. Overall, the average length of a cueca song is two minutes.

Stanza	Musical Period	Musical Chords	refrains	Text	refrains
q u a t r a i n	a	I: E-A-B7-E :I			
	b	E-A-F#7-B	<i>La vida</i>	Qué lindos son los faisanes,	-
	b	A-E-B7-E	<i>La vida</i>	qué lindo es el pavo real;	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
	a	A-E-B7-E	<i>La vida</i>	<i>qué lindo es el pavo real;</i>	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
	b	E-A-F#7-B	<i>La vida</i>	más lindos son los poemas	-
	b	A-E-B7-E	<i>La vida</i>	de la Gabriela Mistral,	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
s e g u i d i l l a	a	E-A-F#7-B		Pablo de Rokha es güeno,	-
	b	A-E		pero Vicente	-
	b	B7-E		vale el doble y el triple,	-
	a	A-E		dice la gente.	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
	b	B7-E		<i>Pablo de Rokha es güeno,</i>	-
	a	E-A-F#7-B		<i>pero Vicente</i>	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
c o d a	b	A-E		Dice la gente, sí.	-
	b	B7-E		No cabe duda	<i>huifa ay ay ay</i>
	c	E-A-F#7-B		que el más gallo se llama Pablo Neruda.	
				¡Corre que ya te agarra Nicanor Parra!	

Example 1, 'Cueca de los Poetas' [track 21], text by Nicanor Parra and music by Violeta Parra

Violeta Parra's research on the Chilean cueca, crystalized in the album *La Cueca presentada por Violeta Parra* (Parra, 1959b) – titled *La Cueca* (Parra, 2014j) in the current official discography - recorded in 1959 for Odeon (Cancioneros, 2015) - establishes four types of cueca that subsequently prove to be a key form for her musical works; the traditional short cueca, the waltz-cueca, the 'voluntary long cueca' and the 'mandatory long cueca'.

It is not accidental therefore that once Violeta and Nicanor discovered the richness and practice of the popular poetry in Chile their artistic production mirrored it too. For example, in his next book *La Cueca Larga* (1958), with the cover and illustrations created by Nemesio Antúnez, Nicanor established some key characteristic features of this new antipoetry by incorporating the everyday language of rural people into 'educated' poetry. Still, in *Canto General*, Neruda had already used the cueca form in the fourth chapter 'The Liberators' to write three poems: 'Cueca', 'Passion' 'And Death' (Neruda, 1993, pp.108-110). The first is a type of language used by ordinary people such as street-troubadours, popular singers, and minstrels that, at the same time, gives to it a type of Chilean 'identity' by identifying typical objects, characters, and other references to the location where he grew up. For example, each antipoem refers to a traditional situation for people of this part of Chile. 'Couplets of Wine' narrates the different events in which wine is present and shared in the lives of countryside people - Chile is one of the most widely recognized wine producers worldwide. The second, 'The Chuico and the Demijohn', refers, in its title, to two types of carafes or wine containers which are made of glass or slab, spherical in shape and usually have a wicker cover; and which Violeta set to music [track 22] in her album *Toda Violeta Parra* (Parra, 2014a, track 5). The third, 'Toast to the human and the divine', depicts a situation in which a popular singer sings in verses about human or ordinary affairs (in opposition to the divine verses that talk about religious topics). In 'La Cueca Larga' (N. Parra, 1969), Nicanor brings out the close relationship between music and poetry in the rural areas of Chile. Interestingly, Violeta was motivated by Nicanor to make drawings to illustrate a new edition of *La Cueca Larga* (Parra, 2011, p. 199), and to collect by 'unearthing' old verses in the same way as collectors such as Ramon Laval, Rodolfo Lenz (Lenz, 1904) or Julio Vicuña Cifuentes (Vicuña Cifuentes, 1912) did, but approaching her research 'from inside' because she and her family were part of that community who had actively practised and known these old verses. It is worth stressing the fact that Nicanor chose a musical form to write and develop his ideas about antipoetry in opposition to the lyrical poetry of Neruda. This is interesting because it might explain to some extent the interdisciplinary range of both Nicanor and Violeta's poetics. For example, Mario Rodríguez (2011) describes the way that Nicanor uses the metrical form of the cueca to situate his antipoetry within Chilean popular customs in the same fashion as the Nerudian rhetoric poetry would refer to the Cuban bolero. Among other features, there is a systematic use of the humour and irony made playful use by ordinary people, and which Nicanor identifies with the Quevedian humour practised by his father, and which the popular newspapers called 'Lira popular' (Morales, 1972, p. 13; Yamal, 1983, p. 64).

Excerpt from 'Coplas del vino' [Couplets of wine]

El pobre toma su trago
 Para compensar las deudas
 Que no se pueden pagar
 Con lagrimas ni con huelgas.
 (N. Parra, 1969, p. 68)

The poor man takes his drink
 to compensate his debts
 which cannot be paid
 Neither with tears nor with strikes

When Parra introduced this musical form in *La Cueca Presentada por Violeta Parra* (Parra, 1959b), it was claimed that the cueca form was widely played by women and that there were two types of long-cuecas. Soublette wrote the introduction for the LP's booklet claiming that the cueca's texts have a delicate ingenuity and humour in the same fashion as European medieval poetry and painting, and provided an explanation of the long-cueca as follows:

This is danced at the time the party begins to decay, or as a challenge to dancers who are conceited. It is mandatory to dance until the "singer" shuts up and it usually lasts for thirty minutes straight, at least forty repetitions. What is common is the 'cueca of nineteen', so named because it reaches nineteen repetitions, enough to break any type of pair of new shoes. (Parra, 1959b)

Another important feature in the practice and performance of the cueca that Parra was going to use and develop was that many female singers she encountered had very good guitar skills, having knowledge of many types of tunings and accompaniments for this form. This is known as 'Guitarra Traspuesta' [transposed guitar], which is also part of the Canto a lo Poeta and a distinctive form practised by rural singers (Astorga, 2000, p. 61). In his study of the Chilean guitar, Sergio Sauvalle (1994, p. 6) explains that "in Chile, the number of transposed tunings is huge, [...] 'there are forty tunings'. Actually, singers and guitar players only know a few of these at a time. In the [Chilean] Ninth Region, for example, they usually master seven". Overall, Sauvalle accounts for fifty-two different tunings in Chile, also called 'finares'. More importantly there was a common pattern and practice to simplify and minimize the use of the left hand so that it could find chords with more free strings (Ibid.). Likewise, Parra established four types of these tunings in her album: the common tuning (E B G D A E); the second one was called 'Por segunda alta' [raised second], because the second string should be raised a half-tone to give the tonic chord C (E C G C G E), and also lowering the 4th string to C, and the 5th string to G. Soublette and Parra provide further explanation about the use of this tuning style in the album booklet. Yet what interests me the most is the interdisciplinary idea with which the following paragraph begins because it is quite similar to what Parra poetically says in the 'Décima III' about "translating the guitar" and "weaving the narration":

[S]ingers play the melody of all they are singing, with an accompaniment style that they call “make the guitar speak”. Also, according to the tessitura of the voice of the singer, the singers sing the second voice or in unison with it. In this tuning [raised second] two forms of accompaniment are practised. One is the normal mode of plucking the strings with all fingers, and another that takes the name ‘for transport’ and that is to make a bridge with outstretched fingers, which moves on the strings, constantly carrying the chord tuning, fluctuating between the tonic, dominant and subdominant. Some female singers alternate these two types of performance, which gives some elegant and curious hand movements. Also, the singers generally play the famous waltz-cueca, most of the time without singing, and whose fingering touch is very similar to the accompaniment when playing the harp. (Parra, 1959b)

The third tuning style is the so-called ‘Por tercera alta’ [raised third] in which the guitar strings must be adjusted to the intervals of the F-major chord, except the first-string E is preserved and becomes F only when making positions. The fourth is ‘Por prima’ [prime], in which the second string is raised a half-tone, as in the ‘raised second’, but in this tuning, the melody is played with the first string. However, Soubllette also underscores important aspects that inform the cueca performance and its main features which Parra pointed out as a finding of her research in southern Chile. Soubllette wrote:

The female singers of the province of Concepción sing with head bowed and eyes fixed on the position of the fingers on the strings. In Chillán the singer’s head is cocked to the side and staring at the floor. Violeta Parra, who is from that city, could check later that her curious way of singing, head slumped sideways and staring at the floor, was not a craze of her own but an atavism of their land. Almost all singers in the province of Concepción have high, nasal voices; some, however, have a guttural voice. All of them sing by using ‘glissando’ from note to note, also, they use falsetto to simulate voice breaking in an extremely curious way. (Parra, 1959b)

What Soubllette and Parra explained when talking about the cultural practice of the folk song is the outstanding musical skills achieved by these singers who had distinctive ways of playing despite their lack of musical training [track 23]. The use of a guttural voice, ‘glissando’, and the ‘fixed positions’ in the left hand in search of economy of movement became the natural focus of Parra’s guitar skills when starting to re-create and create music for solo guitar. For example, in 1957,⁵⁸ Parra had recorded her first album *Violeta Parra. Canto y Guitarra. El Folklore de Chile, Volume I* (Parra, 1957a) - titled *Cantos Campesinos* (Parra, 2014e) in the current official discography - in which there are two instrumental pieces for solo guitar that are broadly informed by the guitar skills of rural singers ‘Tres Cuecas Punteadas’ [track 24] and ‘Tres Polkas Antiguas’ [track 25]. It is a very interesting recording because it expresses the deliberate will of composition of music without lyrics; it represents experimentation in the field of what is known as art music. Besides showing her guitar skills in the same way as traditional

⁵⁸ Isabel Parra claims it was in 1956 (Parra, 2011, p. 232)

singers do, it demonstrates an extensive custom in rural areas of Chile. Raul Aicardi describes another work for solo guitar titled 'Tres Cuecas Punteadas' [Example 2] in the album booklet:

At some funerals cuecas are played to encourage people. These cuecas are danced without a handkerchief, without *zapateo* [stomp], without singing, and serve to prevent people from falling asleep. Violeta Parra performs three 'Chilean' tunes, imitating first the [Chilean] guitarrón, in the second one the harp, and in the third the piano-style cueca. (Parra, 1957a)

This explanation is a very good example of Parra's poetics of translation in music, in which she intentionally translated three specific musical forms into an instrumental piece for solo guitar. In doing so, she tried to imitate the guitarron, the harp and the piano sonorities when playing cueca.



Example 2, Violeta Parra, 'Tres Cuecas Punteadas' score transcription, measures 1-15 (Concha et al., 1994).

The second piece that informs these guitar skills is *Tres Polkas Antiguas* [three old polkas] which - Aicardi claims - depicts the musical form that found great popularity in rural areas in the nineteenth century. The third piece is *Cueca Valseada* [waltz-cueca] which shows the success of European musical forms in the Chilean countryside, but incorporates a local feature by tuning the guitar in the key of C: raised second (ECGCGE). The piece 'Canto a lo divino' is a Parra composition recorded for the album *Composiciones para guitarra* (Parra, 1957b) that translates the Canto a lo Poeta practice because Parra uses musical sounds to recreate the sung verse practice. These short pieces summarise and exemplify the guitar skills described and researched by Parra. For example, they make a systematic use of the open strings as accompaniment in both the bass (played by the thumb) and in the passing-notes of the melody. Another example is the upward and downward movement of the fixed position of the left hand through the guitar neck mainly by the index and the middle fingers, and even the use of the *glissando* exposing the the efficient left-hand fingering technique of these female singers.

Parra was going to bring together all this knowledge derived from the cueca and translate it first to music - from vocal to instrumental music - as we shall see next, but also into her visual artworks. Proof of this is in the bowed heads of the guitarist in the paintings *Velorio de Angelito* [Figure 41], *La guitarrera* [Figure 42] and the arpillera *Hombre con Guitarra* [Figure 14], where we clearly see the posture described before;⁵⁹ the head position is also represented in many other works such as *Fiesta en casa de Violeta* [Figure 5], *Thiago de Mello* [Figure 43] and *El Circo* [Figure 8]. On the one hand, we can also identify the cueca dance on these visual works because the figures that appear 'dancing' are separated with handkerchiefs in hands whereas in those works in which the figures appear holding hands they are probably dancing the other popular form in rural areas, the waltz. Moreover, we find a papier-mache titled *La cueca* [Figure 44] which reminds us of Parra's dancing alone for the Swiss television documentary, and what was going to become a symbol for the victims of Pinochet dictatorship known as 'cueca sola' [cueca of solitude] that the 'Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos' and many widows used to artistically protest about the missing detainees (Agosín, 1987, p. 65). Also, the arpillera *La Cueca* [Figure 7] provides a very good example of Parra's ability to translate musical poetics into visual.⁶⁰ But it also reminds us of the meaning of the coloured faces of the dancers, the woman on the left has a face

⁵⁹ Sáez (2017, p. 71) claims that when Parra started to make recordings, it was very difficult as the microphone barely recorded her voice because she sang with her head bowed.

⁶⁰ In the Louvre catalogue (Brunhammer, 1964, p. 8), this arpillera is explained by a five-line stanza which presumably comes from a cueca text, though I have not been able to identify it.

black with some white lines, whereas the male figure has a white face. They can represent Parra's parents because her mother was of indigenous descent and her father was Spanish descent. Yet, this is also the case for the arpillera *La Révolte des Paysans* [Figure 56] where she depicts a farmers' strike that was inspired by her grandfather who suffered the poverty of peasant people in rural Chile, and it is also coloured in black with white lines (Parra, 2014k).



Figure 41, Violeta Parra, 1964, *Velorio de angelito*, oil on canvas, 27 x 41 cm, Fundación Violeta Parra, Santiago



Figure 42, Violeta Parra, *La guitarrera*, 1963, 67 x 58 cm, oil on canvas, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 43, Violeta Parra, 1960, *Thiago de Mello*, jute sewn and embroidered with wool and wool work, 165 x 130 cm, Fundación Violeta Parra, Santiago



Figure 44, Violeta Parra, 1963 – 1965, *La Cueca*, papier-mâché on cardboard, 100 x 66 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

Returning to the relationship between the Parra siblings, Nicanor's *La Cueca Larga* further proves the artistic connection between them. In 1958 Violeta recorded the musicalization of Nicanor's *Cueca Larga* [track 26] poem on the album *Violeta Parra. El Folklore de Chile Vol. II* (Parra, 1958) – titled *Violeta Parra y su Guitarra* (Parra, 2014f, track 9) in the current official discography - singing the first part of the poem - and then singing the second part [track 27] in *La Cueca* (Parra, 2014j, track 26). In these versions Violeta uses the F-Bb-G7-C chords in a traditional and tonal fashion. *La Cueca Larga 1960* (N. Parra, 1960) is a version - the longest one at almost eight minutes in length - where Violeta just plays the guitar between declamations but does not accompany the text while Roberto Parada narrates Nicanor's poem [track 28]. The fourth version [track 29] is totally different, a recording found in Switzerland in 1969 by Nicanor, probably made in Europe, and included later on the album *Composiciones para guitarra* (Parra, 2014g, track 13).⁶¹ In this last version of *La Cueca Larga* – of five and a half minutes in length - Violeta incorporates new musical elements that make them sound quite different to the early versions, starting with percussion in the traditional six-eight metre and without

⁶¹ In a letter written in Geneva, in 1962, Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 138) says that “I think I am going to record my music for solo guitar the next week

chords. Melodically, the guitar plays a line that serves as the introduction: F#-C-D-Bb-A. Curiously, this version of the piece has been comparatively neglected in discussions of Parra's musical development. Its complexity alone is interesting from the beginning because of the atonal melody of the introduction, but more significant is that Parra develops this dissonant melody throughout the entire piece, the chords appearing only for a few sections.⁶²

Anticuecas

The five anticuecas are a series of short pieces of music for solo guitar that Parra is thought to have composed during the 1950s. These pieces stand out for their musical content, specifically for the rhythmic and tonal development derived from the cueca, but also, and belying its sophistication, for not being notated. This raises several questions, such as: why are they regarded as important? Why the prefix 'anti'? What do they mean in artistic terms, and within the context of Parra's artwork overall? In what context were they created? Was this type of guitar composition fashionable in those times? Let us begin by addressing how these pieces are framed within the musical history of Chile and Latin America. As we have seen, Parra's *Composiciones para guitarra* (1957b) contains six works, of which two are polkas and one a 'Canto a lo divino' [track 30]; traditional folk forms musically translated to a solo guitar, and also accompanied by Soubllette on flute [track 31 and track 32]. The other three pieces are different. 'Tres Palabras' [track 33] seems to have no reference to a traditional form at all. Yet, there are two pieces with the title 'Anticueca 1' [track 34] and 'Anticueca 2' [track 35]. Soubllette wrote in the album booklist:

First it is necessary to notice that the compositions for guitar that Violeta Parra publishes in this recording are not folk music. In publishing them, the famous folklorist wants to offer us a new form of musical art, letting us know that she is also a composer and not only of songs, of those there are many, but a composer of cultured music like the one we can hear in any art music concert. Certainly, when you listen to them, all the auditors will be surprised by the great originality of this beautiful and strange music; there is nothing like it; and it is logical that this is so, since it is the most sincere and spontaneous manifestation of a talent that instinctively has found its own language, its means of expression and its technique. Yes, Violeta Parra is a composer but not like everyone. She, who learned music with the naturalness that a bird learns the song of another bird, neither knows nor wants to know anything about theory, harmony,

⁶² The renowned Chilean composer Gustavo Becerra (1925-2010) also set Nicanor's *Cueca Larga* in 1961 to music for choir, piano and percussion, the implications of which may be worth investigating.

counterpoint or musical form because she innately possesses all these elements to create her art. (Parra, 1957b)

Violeta's anticuecas might be considered in the vanguard tradition of rupture with modern Western music because - in similar ways to Nicanor's formulation of antipoetry – they were developed from traditional music elements to become neither folk/popular nor Chilean art music. Having in mind the parallels between Nicanor and Violeta Parra's poetics, we may consider thus the cueca (song) form as 'modern' because it was 'created' in the nineteenth century - with significant development in the twentieth - and is characterized by its logical, rational and objective structure, as we have seen. On the other hand, we may consider the anticuecas as postmodern because they were created after World War II and are characterised by a subjective, irrational and asymmetric structure that brought variations and nuances to the referred form [the cueca].

Nonetheless, in 1958, an enigmatic word with no reference or meaning in Spanish appears in her album *Violeta Parra. El folklore de Chile II* (Parra, 2014f, track 12). 'Verso por padecimiento' [verse for suffering] [track 36] is an unaccompanied song, written in décima, whose fourth verse contains the word 'anticrisión'. The song's subject is Jesus Christ's crucifixion and Violeta Parra states in the album booklet that she obtained this text from a woman who used to sing it during the procession of the 'San Sebastian' celebration in southern Chile, a religious festival for adoring the image of Saint Sebastian. The stanza describes how Jesus Christ was crucified with nails of 'anticrisión'. As Parra clearly sings that word, it is possible that she was not able to understand the original word and had to 'complete' the word or phrase. As is well known, it was very common for a single song to be collected by Parra from different singers because many did not remember the whole text, so Parra had to reconstruct – by adding, cutting out, ect. - the text herself. Yet, there is also room for speculation regarding an old word which may have fallen into disuse. Whatever its etymology, the word clearly comprises two defined words: 'anti' and 'crisión'. So we do not know what the word 'crisión' means. Can we link, or take this into account for reading Parra's anticuecas or the paintings about Jesus Christ crucifixions [Figures 45 and 46]?

Excerpt from 'Verso por padecimiento' [Verse for Suffering]

Cuando el Divino Señor
los judíos lo azotaron
y en la cruz que lo enclavaron
con clavos de anticrisión,
se queja con gran dolor
porque un costa'o le ofenden,

When the Divine Lord
The Jews whipped him
And on the cross that nailed him
With nails of '*anticrisión*'
He complains with great pain
Because one side offends him,

y unas ca'enas le tienden
 su cuerpo to'o araña'o
 y de espinas corona'o
 debajo de un limón verde.
 (Parra, 2014f, track 14)

And they tend chains for him
 His body all scratched
 And crowned thorns
 Under a green lemon.



Figure 45, Violeta Parra, *Crucifixion*, 1964, 0,60 x 0,70 cm., wire. (caption from the Louvre exhibition)



Figure 46, Violeta Parra, *La cena*, 1964, oil on wood, 32 x 66 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

As Parra's discography shows, the cueca style became a key source of knowledge showing the differences between a cueca played in central Chile, a cueca played in southern Chile, and in northern Chile. In these geographical distinctions, Parra

found that the cueca style that represented her best was that practised near to the town where she was born and grew up. As we have seen, the guitar skills of rural singers - who “make the guitar speak” - were going to become the core from which Parra would explore in ways that were similar to those associated with art music.

Cueca for Solo Guitar: Introduction

What we now know as the Chilean landscape of music for solo guitar during the first half of the twentieth century was quite particular in social and artistic terms. For example, when Parra recorded her first pieces for solo guitar, it was a different repertoire to that which she had been recording as a folk singer, which were mostly EP recordings of songs she had collected and a few of her own songs. Furthermore, I cannot currently find any other recordings of folk music for solo guitar before Parra's. But it was also different to the music for solo guitar created in the first half of the twentieth century whose repertoire was divided into written art music and unwritten folk/popular music, principally Spanish. Furthermore, its gender role divisions were clearly unchanged from the seventeenth century. The female singers, performed joyous songs for dancing almost exclusively, in quatrain verses with guitar, while the male singers specialized in romances, the lyrical, and counterpoint in *décima*, using the Chilean *guitarrón* (Pereira Salas, 1941, p. 218). Thus, guitar music and its performance were defined by the gender and social strata of its practitioners and transmitted and practised orally by popular singers in rural areas of Chile as we shall see next. To begin this historical perspective we can consider sheet-music and texts as the previous stage of musical materiality to the recording industry in Chile that started in the 1930s with the rise of so-called mass culture consumption (Fuentes and Zamora, 2007, p. 7; González, 2005, p. 17).

In this historical view, the literature shows some references to guitar players who wrote/transcribed folk songs and incorporated them into their repertoire which was mainly Italian, French and German art music for piano. For example, the pianists Isidora Zegers (Spain, 1803–Chile, 1869) and Federico Guzmán (Chile, 1827-1885), were two of the founders of the ‘Chilean Music Society’ in 1826 and the first conservatory of Chile in 1850, where guitar tuition was not included, the instrument only being considered appropriate for folk music (Blondel, 1971, p. 10). In this context, Sergio Sauvalle claims that the performance of these instruments was socially divided during this century:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the rise in popular demand for Independence, popular musical began to give vent to the expression of new political possibilities. The guitar and the harp represent, organologically, the popular taste that extended to the *chinganas* and the *parrales* where they go to enjoy the song and the dance. In the wealthy sectors the piano began to be the obligatory instrument, competing for space with the guitar which transcended

social divisions. [...] This fact marks a basic distinction of functionality in these two instruments in this era: while the guitar has been developed within the frameworks of the oral tradition directly linking with the tradition of the Spanish Renaissance people, the piano arrived as an instrument of written culture linked to the dominant layers of European and Chilean society of that time. In this way the guitar represents the people and their culture; while the piano becomes the symbol of the new wealthy classes of Republican Chile. (Sauvalle, 1994, p. 4)

In this period, however, some *zamacuecas* were played at gatherings of the Chilean aristocracy, as well as the customary English country dances. The Spanish-born guitar player Antonio Alba (1870-1940), who developed a prolific musical career in Chile, teaching and publishing transcriptions of European art music, appears to have been the first to write/transcribe folk music for solo guitar: the popular *Zamacueca no. 1*⁶³ (García, 1999; Fuertes and Zamora, 2007; Guerra, 2003). Valparaíso, Chile's seaport, was a centre for music publishing and other forms of musical culture, where Alba established and developed the guitar as a soloist's instrument, incorporating it into different chamber music groups; but more importantly, this transposed the social space of the music to the concert hall at the beginning of the twentieth century. Music scholar Christian Uribe (2004) claims that these changes, from private spaces to the more public spheres of society, alongside the emergence of the phonograph, had clear ideological foundations established by hegemonic Eurocentrism and romantic idealism, that meant guitar players' activity was strongly reviled by art music composers and the emerging academia that sought to incorporate music into university curricula.

Carlos Pimentel (1887-1958), who is considered the first renowned Chilean guitar-player, started his activity in this boom period of musical transcriptions for solo guitar [track 38] and related pedagogical books published by companies such as 'Carlos Brandt' and 'Carlos Kirsinger' during the first half of the twentieth century (Fuertes and Zamora, 2007, p. 23). The guitar, as an instrument, and its music, were openly downplayed for not having an art music tradition by Chilean composers such as Alfonso Leng (1884-1974) and Domingo Santa Cruz (1899-1987) who established the reform of the Chilean conservatory at the end of the 1920s (Uribe, 2004, p.34). The guitar was used to play folk music, and was only legitimated and recognized when international figures visited Chile such as the Spaniard Andrés Segovia (1893-1987), who presented the guitar as a solo instrument that could effectively play J. S. Bach and art music in concert halls. In other words, guitar music was discriminated against because it was part of oral and non-notated cultures. In fact, the guitar was closely linked to popular activities and parties where peasants played Spanish popular tunes; because of its size and

⁶³ Sergio Sauvalle's version for solo guitar: [track 37].

portability, it was very popular in such places as the *chinganas*, the nineteenth-century Chilean taverns (Pereira Salas, 1941, p. 86). However, it was not until 1948 that the guitar officially began to be taught at the Conservatory under the chair of Liliana Perez Corey (1917-1990), who learned guitar from Alba's lessons. It is not accidental that a woman was the first guitar teacher because it was the instrument socially identified with women, and housewives, who received lessons in how to sing accompanied by the guitar in both the high classes and the countryside (Fuentes and Zamora, 2007, p. 25; Pereira Salas, 1941).

Overall, the history of twentieth-century Chilean music shows a limited number of this type of composition by guitar players, on the one hand, who developed their own versions of folk music, and on the other, composed art music (Uribe, 2004). For example, in the former group we found *Así te siento tonada* (1964) by Ricardo Acevedo (1932-2014) [track 39], *Tonada sin retorno* (1987) by Eulogio Dávalos (1945-) [track 40], *Sirilla en rondo* (1993) by Victor Biskupovic (1949-2002) [track 41], and the five anticuecas by Violeta Parra, among others. The latter is represented by pieces such as *Tres preludios para guitarra* (1963) by Darwin Vargas [track 42], *Sugerencias de Chile* (1940) by Jorge Urrutia Blondel [track 43], *Esquinas* (1971) by Juan Orrego Salas [track 44], or *Siete preludios breves* (1962) by Miguel Letelier [track 45]. A special mention is deserved for *Resonancias de Rapa-Nui* (1986) by Pablo Delano, which features traditional or folk music from Easter Island.

Interestingly, we may find some stimulating parallels between Parra's five anticuecas and examples of world-famous music from the region. Most world-famous Latin American composers of art music such as Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) and Argentinean Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) could incorporate a distinctive Latin American poetic into their oeuvre, but also were aware that this poetic has a musical instrument that has been widely played in that part of the continent. Likewise, The Paraguayan Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885-1944), considered to be one of the foremost South American composers for the guitar in the twentieth century, was also the first guitar player to record music for solo guitar worldwide, and even composed a Chilean *cueca* [track 46] (Wade, 2010, p. 164; Stover, 1992). In 1940, Andrés Segovia, who played a key role during the twentieth century in the development of the instrument, encouraging prestigious composers around the world to write music for guitar, received Villa-Lobos' *Cinq préludes* [Five preludes] (Villa-Lobos, 1954) for solo guitar. Villa-Lobos's five preludes [track 47] represent not just the synthesis between art music and folk music, but also a musical language shaped from the technical challenges presented by the guitar, as Villa-Lobos himself played the guitar and composed many works for the

instrument, such as *Choros no. 1* (1920), *Suite Populaire Bresilienne* (1928), *Twelve Etudes* (1929), and Concerto for guitar and orchestra (1951). According to British composer John Duarte (Wolff and Alessandrini, 2007), Villa-Lobos made clear references in each prelude. For example, the first, *Lyric melody*, is a homage to the Brazilian *sertanejo* [a music style that had its origins in the countryside of Brazil], while the second, *Capadocia & capoeira melody*, is a homage to the martial art that combines elements of combat, acrobatics, music, dance and ritual. The third is a homage to J. S. Bach, the fourth is a homage to the Brazilian Indian, and the fifth is a homage to social life, to the young teenagers who frequent Rio's concerts and theatres. More recently, Piazzolla composed his first solo guitar work, *Cinco piezas* [track 48], early in the 1980s (Annala and Matlik, 2010, p. 15; Piazzolla, 1981). The first, *Campero*, showcases the traditional folk form known as *milonga*. The second is *Romántico*, which refers to Francisco Caro's 1940s tango in a romantic style, and it is followed by *Acentuado* that refers to the rhythmical tango played and danced in a very sexual and provocative way in the suburbs of the cities called tango *canyengue*. *Tristón* is a slow and somewhat melancholic piece structured by the rhythmical pattern of chords. The fifth, *Compadre*, represents the development of tango sought by the author; for example, it is written in 5/4 time, with *glissandos*, percussion effects, chromatics, dissonant chords and syncopation. Unlike Villa-Lobos, Piazzolla composed a few works for guitar, including *La historia del tango* for flute and guitar, and *Concierto para bandoneon, guitarra y orquesta*. Still, how does Parra's work fit into, or disrupt, or put into a new context, that repertoire? Can we compare and place the anticuecas within the tradition of music for solo guitar from South America? In the next pages, we shall analyse Parra's music for solo guitar, film, and ballet, in order to approach these questions

The Five Anticuecas

In 1958, the Chilean music magazine *Revista Musical Chilena* interviewed Parra concerning her fruitful trip to Europe where she performed and recorded Chilean folk music, introducing her as a singer who is "attracted by a certain intuition and guided by her natural instinct, Violeta Parra knew how to reach the heart of the genius of our people and discover its most precious treasures, promoting it all along Chile" (Vicuña, 1958, p. 71). However, the interviewer devoted two paragraphs to explaining a new facet that the singer was experimenting with; Parra had started to 'compose' a kind of art music for solo guitar named as 'anticuecas' (Ibid., p. 74). The interview points out that Parra has never been trained in music, so she is a self-taught composer and did not want to know about counterpoint, harmony or thematic development. Finally, the interview highlights that the anticuecas have the same rhythms as traditional cuecas, but with a different

outcome; the anticuecas would “reveal the hidden soul of the cueca”, by achieving a strange and beautiful originality unlike anything heard before. In fact, the interview does not say anything about the recording we now know as *Composiciones para guitarra* (1957b), where Parra recorded the first two anticuecas. After that, there was no information about these pieces long after Parra’s death. Yet, the first person to publicly recognize the existence of these pieces was Chilean composer Alfonso Letelier (1912-1994), who had invited Parra to his home in Aculeo to collect folk songs from peasant people (TVN, 2008). Letelier, who considered the anticuecas to have the elements of a true art, added that he had heard them in a private meeting, and Parra had explained the scope of the title saying that she had tried to incorporate all the musical elements of the cueca and its ‘inner spirit’, but they were not cuecas at all (Letelier, 1967, p. 110).

Parra gave much of her research to the Institute of Folk Investigations at the University of Chile, where she met musicologists, musicians, folklorists and composers, such as Miguel Letelier (1939-2016) – Alfonso’s son - who advised Parra to write some of her music down. This crystalized in around 1960 when he spent a week writing a score of what Parra was playing (Concha, 1995, p. 71; Parra, 2011, p. 250). Later, around 1994, the transcriptions of sixteen works for solo guitar in the book *Violeta Parra: Composiciones para guitarra* (Concha et al., 1994) were released and an analytic article ‘Violeta Parra, compositora’ (Concha, 1995), appeared where it is stated they were transcribed from magnetic tapes that Miguel Letelier recorded in Parra’s home in 1960, though it is not clear whether Parra’s *Composiciones para guitarra* (1957b) was used or not. So far, this is the only material that proves the existence of eleven works in which Parra translates folkloric elements to solo guitar music, and five works in which she translates something different altogether. Overall, the five anticuecas have a common rhythmical pattern: the hemiola which shifts between 6/8 and 3/4 tempi. Anticueca 3 [track 49] has three contrasted themes whose recurrent ‘tonality’ is E flat but in the second section ‘modulates’ to A flat; the third section is dominated by a chromatic phrase that descends and ascends, using semitones. The ‘Anticueca 4’ [track 50] is melodically characterized by the role played by the arpeggio between the first and second strings in the first section that goes backwards and forwards, while, in the second section, the melodic role is played through chords, and by the bass line in the third section.

Anticueca 5

Violeta Parra

Tr: Alejandro Escobar

The musical notation for 'Anticueca 5' by Violeta Parra, measures 1-8, is presented in two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Guitar' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Gtr.'. Both staves are in 3/4 time and have a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation shows a sequence of chords and single notes, with a measure rest in the fifth measure of the bottom staff.

Example 3, Violeta Parra, 'Anticueca 5', first motif 'A', measures 1-8.

Structured as a free *rondo* in a simple time of 3/4 – though sometimes in 6/8 - the 'Anticueca 5' [track 51] shows the highest complexity in terms of thematic development as its initial motif is based on a diminished triad [Example 3]. Specifically, it is the first inversion of the diminished chord on A [C-E \flat -A]. This triad is a three-finger fixed position over the fifth fret, using the first, second and third strings, which moves chromatically upwards and downwards by a semitone (B \flat [A \sharp]-E-C \sharp) in the first four bars. The motif is developed within the first four bars compounding an entire musical phrase which is developed/repeated by changing the fixed position to the second, third and fourth strings, resulting in a different triad in the fifth bar: E minor (and F minor). Next, the same musical phrase recurs when changing to the lower position, covering the third, fourth and fifth strings, but starting with the diminished triad, then repeated within the first twenty-five bars as the exposition or "A" section. As we shall see next, this triad, treated as a musical cell, is used in a similar manner as the music Parra created for the documentary *Mimbre*. So we can assume that Parra used this triad as a poetics that could be further developed. As Concha showed, we can also use music theory to explain Parra's anticuecas, but it is unlikely that she was thinking of using the first inversion of a diminished chord [C \sharp -E-A \sharp] or a diminished seventh chord [C \sharp -E-B \flat] in the first bar, since both may be correctly notated, but rather she was thinking in terms of chords or positions as the 'guitarra traspuesta' does.

Music scholar Olivia Concha (1995, p. 93), who has made the only existing analysis of these pieces so far, uses the methodological tools of art music analysis to describe their elements, noting that the prefix 'anti' paraphrases Nicanor's *Antipoemas*, but, more interesting for the author, the use of the binary compound metre of the cueca

(6/8-3/4) for the structures in the five pieces allows Violeta Parra to explore tonality and what in art music is known as the emancipation of dissonance. This approach raised some criticism regarding the narratives over the 'cultivated' and the 'popular'⁶⁴ as Jorge Aravena's (2004) article demonstrates, in which the author criticises the link between Arnold Schoenberg's dodecaphonic technique and some of Parra's music such as 'El Gavilán' due to Parra's being self-taught.⁶⁵ As Oporto (2013, p.123-124) pointed out, it is certainly exaggerated to say Parra used dodecaphonic technique: the presence of twelve tones in some passages of the pieces does not mean the technique was used.⁶⁶ Still the frequent and consistent use of dissonance in Parra's music does allow us to consider Parra's 'opening and extension of the tonality, "as well as a 'developed linguistic elaboration," because admitting ignorance of musical writing and twelve-tone technique does not mean that she did not know what she was doing, nor that she was not able to imagine and create complex structures, chords, timbres, and colours. For example, in an interview for the magazine *Je Vois Tout* (Joanneton, 1970), Parra explains how she composes music since she does not know how to write it on paper, as art music composers do:

Sometimes, while I make an arpillera, a melody comes to my head, and I stop, I take the guitar, and it comes out with an ease... as if I were preparing a soup! [...] Then, in order to not forget, for example, I rehearse all morning. Formerly, when composing for guitar, I drew with lines and dots to remember the melodies and reread the drawings I had imagined. (Joanneton, 1970, p. 22)

⁶⁴ Alfonso Letelier (1967, p. 110) stated that Parra's "significance transcended simple folklorism, rooted in the depths of the vernacular soul, it remains at an equal distance from popular and the cultivated art"

⁶⁵ Olivia Concha (1995, p. 102) stated that the Anticueca number 4 "shows the most advanced elements tending to break the tonal language. As in Anticueca number 5, the presence of dissonant chromatisms lead to atonality, reaching in some episodes of development the use of twelve tones."

⁶⁶ Twelve-tone composition, also known as dodecaphony, is the musical system in "which twelve notes within an octave are treated as 'equal' in an ordered relationship where no group of notes predominates as in the minor/major key system" (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2007, p. 775). Arnold Schoenberg's method organized a fixed order of the twelve chromatic notes and was first introduced in his *five piano* pieces Op. 23" (Ibid.)



Figure 47, Olivia Concha's drawing of Parra's 'Tema libre n° 2'

Likewise, it is interesting to highlight Concha's analysis on the work for solo guitar called 'Tema libre n° 2', where the author claims that the notation of Parra's music in "the first period phrases seem to have been created from a visual perspective rather than from the musical one" [Figure 47]. Moreover, in the article titled 'Atonal Drawings to Express Pain' (1958) from the magazine *ECRAN*, Parra clearly stated her deliberate adoption of music experimentation and elaboration:

To compose and to interpret, I had to learn to play the guitar - she confesses with characteristic honesty. Andrés Segovia taught me in Concepción, and so I discovered that what I had done so far was totally wrong. I did not know how to put my hands on the guitar or a properly fingerpicking. Once I mastered what Segovia taught me, I started to compose soft, melodious musical themes. But not everything is joy and, to express my pain, I 'discovered' the atonal music'. -Violeta does not know music and does not want to learn it - I think what I have is pure, and I do not want to go to the Conservatory - she says. To interpret her atonal compositions, she makes a mental drawing of the movement of her fingers on the guitar and repeats it every time she plays. She has had very good comments from [composer] Acario Cotapos and Enrique Bello. (Navasal, 1958a, p. 14)

I do not know [art] music - she naturally says. Suddenly my hands play on the strings and play something new. I cannot write it because I'm not capable either. I simply memorize it. Then, when the experts heard my little compositions, they assured me that I created using dodecaphony. I never felt it ... because I did not know what that was. (Navasal, 1958b)

These words may be contradictory regarding the 'guitarra traspuesta' style because they seem to suggest that Parra would be downplaying those guitar skills learned from popular singers in order to favour the guitar skills learned from Segovia. Moreover, this article claims that Parra had recorded an album with music for solo guitar - but it does not say it is *Composiciones para guitarra* (1957b) and that she was producing a new album with "modern atonal music", which I am unable to identify. Again, there is an inconsistency in this article because it does not even mention the first two anticuecas released in 1957, a year before. Indeed, the article seems to suggest that Parra was creating 'modern atonal music' that we were yet to hear. Or maybe the article was referring to the music for solo guitar we already knew - the anticuecas, and 'El Gavilán'. This short article raises many questions. For example, did Parra notice any friction with the conservatory in those years when formal learning of the guitar was still a recent development, and traditionally regarded as part of the folk song? In speaking about Segovia, was Parra in alignment with those who thought the guitar could effectively be a concert instrument like the piano and the violin? This is the only text in which Parra talks about "learning to play guitar" from a trained guitar player such as Segovia. In contrast, Parra's interview for the *Chilean Music Magazine* in the same year says that the 'composer' Parra was creating art music - for solo guitar, which she called anticuecas - "without being guided by any guitar teacher", in a self-taught way, and that her main source was the rural musical practices of Chile (Vicuña, 1958, p.74). I think that Parra could well have realized the contradiction of saying she did not know how to play the guitar after learning from Segovia because she never said it again, as shown in the *Revista Musical Chilena*. But more importantly, because in doing so, she would have been downplaying the rural practices she researched, promoted, and on which she based her art, and consequently would be giving undue credit to the art music to which she was publicly opposed, as we shall see in the next chapter when she talks about the conservatory voice.

On the other hand, these words by Parra are significant because it makes Parra's awareness of a cultivated written art music very clear, and a popular unwritten folk music, which she clearly differentiates. Also, she consciously gives 'atonal' music the meaning of pain in a very similar way as she does in her visual works where painting represents the dark side of life. For example, Oporto's (2013, p. 127) study demonstrates Parra's procedures and systematic organization of musical elements such as the tritone, showing us how she used disharmony consciously in a similar way as Theodor Adorno described Schoenberg's emancipation of dissonance in his influential book *Philosophy of Modern Music*, associating it to the notion of pain and unconsciousness within society.

Still, Parra's words may also suggest that she used the terms "atonal" and "dodecaphony" because she had stepped into the art music world whose performers and composers had achieved the highest guitar skills and compositional knowledge. It is obvious these words do not fit well to describe Parra's music, but they come from the types of music that presumably inspired her to create her works. It is quite difficult to imagine what other language Parra could have used to briefly explain her music for solo guitar. This, therefore, may help us to understand the need to use the words "atonal" and "dodecaphony". I would argue that it can also be considered as another provocative strategy, of a covert critique of the art music realm, which has unproblematically used popular music elements as raw material for creating music (Middleton, 2002, p. 130), rather than the symbolic power of academy and art music discourse speaking through the unproblematic innocence of Parra, as suggested by Aravena (2004, p. 24).

Film Music and El Gavilán

As we have seen, Parra's experimentation in music led her to incorporate specific elements she found in rural areas of Chile, and use them for her own creations: the decima, octosyllabic verses in poetry, and in music, the guitar and its tunings - known as 'traspuesta' - and the six-eight rhythm used by the cueca and tonada songs. Therefore, when looking at Parra's language it is possible to identify clear moments of this development in her musical oeuvre that shape her poetics, specifically after having returned to Chile from her first trip to Europe. In that sense, Parra's film music provides an interesting backdrop of additional information to the understanding of the anticuecas, as well as the musical development experienced by this author, because it was created exclusively by playing the guitar. This is the case with three Sergio Bravo (1927) documentaries: *Mimbre*, *Trilla* and *Casamientos de negros*, and Jorge di Lauro & Nieves Yankovic's documentary *Andacollo* (Chileno, 2016; Parra, 2011, p. 110). Worth emphasizing is the fact that these films were the first documentaries by these filmmakers known as the founders of the New Chilean Cinema. Moreover, Parra (Navasal, 1958a, p. 14) also claimed that she was collecting material for her museum in Concepción in 1958, having several photographs which led her to explore in the New Chilean Documentary with Javier Gutierrez' *Trilla-yegua*.

In 1957, Parra met Sergio Bravo,⁶⁷ who had established the Center for Experimental Cinema in Chile in the 1950s, and started filming short documentaries. He

⁶⁷ According to Oviedo (1990, p. 76) Parra and Bravo are said to have had a love affair.

showed Parra his black and white film *Mimbre* [track 52] which displays the creative work of a wicker craftsman named Alfredo Manzano located in the Quinta Normal neighbourhood of Santiago. According to Jacqueline Mouesca (2005, p. 67), Bravo filmed using a realistic approach, avoiding the official folklorized trends of what used to be understood as ‘popular cinema’, using silent film techniques and giving an artistic sense to the craftsman’s manual work, and making a clear re-vindication and valorisation of what popular art is. Bravo (Ibid.) explained the foundations of this University Cinema Club as wanting “to bet on a new language, to totally separate us from what we saw as official Chilean cinema”. Bravo had chosen some Bach music to accompany the images, but Parra expressed her doubts about including a piece of Bach, proposing to include her own music for solo guitar. However, it did not mean changing a sonata, a sarabande, or even a fugue for a traditional cueca as one might think; rather Parra proposed an original music that was neither art music nor folk. Parra decided to translate into music “the movements of the craftsman, as a commentary on what the camera is discovering when he rolls the prodigious figures that he weaves in wicker” (Ibid.).

Mimbre’s music starts with a cluster over the first, second and third strings that moves up from the fifth fret to the twelfth fret in glissando between the first two bars [Example 4]. Rhythmically, it is played with weak beats, while the thumb plays the open sixth string in ostinato - in crotchets. This mixture between the bass and the cluster generates a binary and ternary accent superimposition given by the 3/4 and the 6/8 in the same ways as the cueca does. Next, there is a diminished triad in the first inversion on B (D-F-B) that starts at 2:08, beating in three-four time [Example 5]. This triad is used as a cell from which Parra develops the musical discourse. The position of this triad on the guitar neck is B in the seventh fret of the first string, F in the sixth fret of the second string, and D in the seventh fret of the third string. Then this position is moved by using the second, third and fourth strings; and it continues its movement again to the third, fourth and fifth strings. This movement towards the lower strings comes back to the higher strings to complete the musical phrase. Next, this is followed by the same triad in a higher pitch but this time moved in intervals of a minor third down and up through the guitar neck by using the same strings (1st, 2nd and 3rd) until the minute 2:50.

Music for Mimbres

Violeta Parra
Tr: Alejandro Escobar

The musical score for 'Music for Mimbres' is presented in two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Guitar' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Gtr.'. The time signature is 3/4. The Guitar staff begins with a series of chords and arpeggios, while the Gtr. staff starts at measure 5 with a glissando motif, indicated by a wavy line and a series of notes.

Example 4, Violeta Parra, first section of the film-music *Mimbres* with the glissando motif, measures 1-9.

Music for Mimbres

Violeta Parra
Tr: Alejandro Escobar

The musical score for 'Music for Mimbres' is presented in two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Guitar' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Gtr.'. The time signature is 3/4. The Guitar staff begins with a series of chords and arpeggios, while the Gtr. staff starts at measure 4 with a glissando motif, indicated by a wavy line and a series of notes.

Example 5 Parra, Violeta, second section of the film-music *Mimbres* with a second motif, measures 1-6.

The following year, in 1958, Parra intended to continue her collaborations with filmmakers, this time for the colour documentary *Andacollo*,⁶⁸ the first work of a couple who wanted to depict the celebration of the day of the Virgin of Andacollo in the northern Chilean town that bears its name. This pagan religious festival is filmed during three days from the arrival of the pilgrims to their departure, and follows in detail the three days of festivities, which establishes a relationship between the people and the Virgin. It shows

⁶⁸ Available on the internet at URL: <http://www.cinetecavirtual.cl/fichapelicula.php?cod=72> (Accessed January 2017)

the entrance to the temple and the exit of the figure of the Virgin to be walked through the streets of Andacollo where devotees called ‘chinos’ dance in her honour until the Virgin returns to the temple. It conveys the magnitude of religious devotion in the people and the deep misery that impels them to seek supernatural solutions to their problems. The 28-minute documentary begins with music quite unexpected for a religious theme, although using a similar musical device to that used for *Mimbre*. Parra strums the guitar using a cluster of three notes (a fixed position) and open strings, and moving it up and down with glissando in a binary rhythm near to an allegro tempo. Thus, Parra dispenses with traditional tonal music in favour of a dissonant music based on a repeated beat for the introduction as the narrator describes the event over the duration of a minute. Then, Parra plays a traditional folk form called *esquinazo*,⁶⁹ derived from the *tonada*, a traditional form that is practised in many places in Chile as a welcome to travellers. The music therefore illustrates what the images depict; the arrival of devotees early in the morning to collect the Virgin. Then, after 02:24 minutes, the ‘Anticueca 3’ begins with the narrator explaining the Quechuan past of the Andacollo Virgin; however, Parra plays just the first two parts of it: A and B (about thirty-two measures) until 03:26 minutes into the film. Four seconds later, Parra sings an otherwise unpublished song with guitar, with images showing devotees walking through towns without narration until 05:22. After that a percussive beat starts the ceremonial chants of the people while the images show the town full of people parading with the Virgin image, and the narrator explains the images for the audience. It is not until 20:50 that music returns, when the images show the end of the first day. It is with the first quatrain of the traditional *tonada* ‘De mirarte y no mirarte’ played and sung by Parra that the images show the beginning of the second day with the devotees resting on the floor. After 22:06 minutes, the first two quatrains of the traditional song ‘Si lo que amo tiene dueño’ are heard, which Parra recorded on *Violeta Parra. Tonadas* (Parra, 1959a) – titled *La Tonada* (Parra, 2014d) in the current official discography. On 27:10, Parra plays arpeggios in what appears to be an improvisation as the images depict the desert and mountains after the end of the event.

Bravo’s *Trilla* is an explorative documentary filmed in the wheat fields of the community of Calquinhue in 1959, province of Concepción, depicting the diverse tasks of the farmers harvesting the wheat. Unfortunately, there is no copy of this film with which to assess Parra’s contribution. However, its music works in ways quite similar to *Mimbre*, where Parra plays the guitar imitating the crazy circular race of the horses that trample the spikes of wheat (Mouesca, 2005, p. 67). The emphasis of the filming is not the traditional one of the purely descriptive or passive contemplation of a countryside activity,

⁶⁹ However, it does not appear in the current official Parra’s discography.

but on a depiction whose ambition is to give poetic scope to the reality it shows. The film magazine *Ecran* (1959) highlights the beauty of the beginning of this film, in which Parra's music marks the cadential motion of a cart. Hilda (BICICLETA, 1982, p. 10), Violeta's sister, claims that when they were children, they used to go and participate in the Trilla event where they sang. This is poetically narrated by Parra

Excerpt from 'Décima XLIII'

con esas niñas aprendo
lo que es *mansera* y arado,
arrope, *zanco* y *gloriado*,
y bolillo que está tejiendo;
la piedra que está moliendo;
siembra, apuerca, poda y trilla,
emparva, corta y vendimia;
ya sé lo que es la cizaña,
y cuántas clases de araña,
carcomen la manzanilla.
(Parra, 1998, p. 108)

with those girls I learn
what is *mansera*⁷⁰ and plow,
clothe, *zanco*⁷¹ and *gloriado*,⁷²
and bobbin that is knitting;
the stone that is grinding;
sow, spread, prune and thresh,
emparva,⁷³ cut and vintage;
I already know what the tares are,
and how many kinds of spider,
eat chamomile.

In 1959, Bravo filmed *Casamiento de Negros*, on the ceramics of Quinchamalí to depict Parra's song (Chileno, 2016). It never premiered, because the negatives were lost, according to its author. Finally, Parra composed the song 'Hace falta un guerrillero' for the restoration of the classic silent film *El Husar de la Muerte* (1960) by Pedro Sienna, but that was not included in the final cut (Ibid.). As we have briefly seen, Parra's film music was quite interesting, but unfortunately, it has received less academic attention than, for example, 'El Gavilán'.

'El Gavilán' [track 53], a musical piece for voice and guitar composed around 1960, is considered the acme of Parra's musical production. Chilean Prize for Music (1968) winner Alfonso Letelier (1967, p. 109), regarded its musical development as a truly artistic music with folkloric and popular elements. As Parra did not know how to write music, composer Miguel Letelier, winner of the Chilean Prize for Music (2008), recorded Parra's 'El Gavilán' (Oporto, 2013, p. 27) because he heard Parra playing this 'outstanding' music in a street exhibition of Parra's visual art (TVN, 2008). 'El Gavilán' presents harmonic formulas that are not characteristic of folklore, but rather, of a modern musical development with similarities to art music. In an interview recorded while Parra was giving courses on traditional songs at the University of Concepción, in 1960, Parra

⁷⁰ glossary

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

(2014b, track 1) explains that 'El Gavilán' is a ballet whose compositional elements are taken from the literary and musical folk culture of rural Chile, and attempts to problematize the interrelations of love, power and capitalism. According to Parra, the location of this story is a rural area in Chile and is divided into three parts. In the first, a woman, represented by a chicken, falls in love with the hawk - "El Gavilán" - believing he was a flower in the garden, going to search for this carnation but being wounded by the thorns in the garden. In the second part, a third character appears, embodied as an old chicken that warns her that this carnation is a dangerous hawk. In the third part, the characters of 'wind', 'rain', 'thunder' and 'lightning' appear, to try to prevent the arrival of this woman at the top of a hill in wait for the 'hawk'.

In her detailed analysis, Oporto (2013, p. 171) claims that 'El Gavilán' structure is ruled by three key elements. The first is by the tritone, which in music theory means that two sounds as a musical interval are composed of three adjacent whole tones. This tritone signifies evil, as it frequently has in the history of music (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2007, p. 770). Oporto links the tritone of F-B with the words 'Tiqui tiquiti' in the first part [Example 6]; the Bb-E tritone with the words 'Ay de mí' [Poor me!] in the middle section, which is repeated with the same interval in the third section with the words 'tanto que me decía la gente' [people told many times]. Another structural element is the cueca rhythm which is characterized by the hemiola formula 6/8-3/4; meaning the articulation of two units of triple metre as if they were notated as three units of duple metre. Its third element refers to its literary features which are ruled by the philosophical figure of the scapegoat posed by René Girard, as the symbol for the devil. Thus, 'El Gavilán' depicts literally and symbolically different dualities and conjunctions of opposites; the battle between good and evil, between God and Satan, and light and darkness, love and hate, and so forth (Oporto, 2013, p.304).



Example 6, Violeta Parra, ‘El Gavilán’ score detail of “tritone” (F-B), measures 122-129.



Figure 48, Violeta Parra (n.d.) *El Gavilán*, oil on fabric, 105 x 83 cm, private collection.

Notably, Parra also painted an oil on canvas titled *El Gavilán* [Figure 48], which depicts the traditional imagery of Jesus Christ crucified, but with interesting and enigmatic details. Montealegre (2011, p. 43), observed that it represents an atypical Jesus Christ's crucifixion who 'holds' the thieves in each hand. Oporto (2013, pp. 271-273) claims that although there seems to be no relation between the title and the painted imagery, it is possible to approach an understanding of its meaning by using René Girard's notion of 'diasparagmos' [scapegoat]. Oporto interprets that the black of the backdrop, as well as the blue of the circle coincide with the darkness generated by the eclipse that is said to have happened at the moment of Jesus Christ's death. She also notes the unusual disposition of the three characters, in which Jesus Christ, at the centre painted in red, holds a thief with his left hand, who is painted within a yellow bag, whereas the other thief on his right is painted within a green bag but without touching Jesus Christ's hand. The abstract image of the thieves, whose heads and one arm respectively are the only visible parts of their bodies, also recall their crucifixion. This imagery is interpreted by Oporto as an allusion to the motif of the scapegoat and dismemberment that Girard calls the Dionysiac *diasparegmos*, a sacrificial and collective murder carried out by the bad thief (in green). That is why the yellow thief touches Jesus Christ's hand; he is going to heaven with Jesus Christ, whereas the bad thief is going to Satan's darkness for committing the sacrificial assassination. Oporto concludes that this also shows Parra's own moral and religious values learned from the popular Catholicism of rural Chile. Oporto's interpretation of this painting is significant because it is the first attempt to explain and connect these works, and it brings interesting insights from an interdisciplinary perspective; between music and visual art. Yet, a more accurate reading of the image would say that Jesus Christ is not holding the thief's hand, painted in yellow, but that their arms cross over due to the way the picture has been rendered while the "green thief" does not even touch Jesus Christ's hand.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how the cueca was used by Violeta Parra as a source for experimentation and tradition from which her own musical language and translation ideas developed. This is exemplified by Parra's musicalization of her brother's antipoem 'Cueca larga de los Meneses' by translating its particular poetics, and Parra's album describing the varieties of cuecas and, more importantly, the particular guitar skills developed by rural singers. The artistic similarities between Parra and her brother were also settled in the cueca form, whose features and development stages are present in the same way as their literary works. Thus, Music and poetry work together interdisciplinarily in order to shed light on a type of 'Parrean' poetics.

The 'guitarra traspuesta' serves as a facilitator for the performer's left-hand to prioritize the better execution of the melody on the upper strings while the lower, free, strings play the harmonic accompaniment. Here, Parra found music for solo guitar in the popular musicians' repertoire too and used this to translate her own musical language. In fact, she intentionally translated the piano, harp and guitarron musical poetics into a solo guitar piece. Similarly, a significant performance feature in Parra's visual art was developed from this practice; the performer's body posture of leaning sideways into the guitar, which marked a visual – and also a voicing - feature in Parra, as depicted in her artworks and heard in this album through the different "high", "nasal" and "guttural" voices she translated. In other words, the high nasal and guttural voices are somehow linked to her physical posture of leaning into the guitar. This idea may have clear poetical implications if we recall the phrase "to make the guitar speak" because it echoes Parra's method of "weaving the narration". For example, in Spanish the word 'boca' [mouth] is used to refer to the guitar [sound] hole - from where the sound comes or the guitar speaks - so one may interpret Parra's singing with head bowed near the guitar as trying to put her mouth close to the guitar's mouth. Both Parra's voice and the guitar voice get close to speaking their own language. Even more, in the painting *El pájaro y la grabadora* [Figure 2], Parra depicts a woman whose body is in the shape of a guitar, in which the sound hole also contains the figure of a singer, which has clear implications in the idea of the voice and the guitar hole as an interdisciplinary theme or poetics.

We have also seen the context and background in which Parra's works for solo guitar were composed, shedding light on significant elements such as the genre profile of its performers, the social class and milieu in which it belonged and was performed, the notion of cultivated and non-cultivated art, and so forth. Overall, the guitar had been the instrument played in unurbanized areas of Chile where the Spanish troubadour

tradition was stronger than the urbanized art music tradition of piano, as played by the bourgeoisie in the main cities of the country. Curiously, Parra's five anticuecas coincide with other art music composers who composed five pieces intended as a series for solo guitar. The five anticuecas and 'El Gavilán', however, seem to come from the 'long-cueca' whose structure is longer than the regular cueca because of the repetition and mix of quatrains - that may last thirty minutes - but more importantly, because it was 'The long-cueca 1960' in which Parra experimented with tonality in the same way as in the five anticuecas and 'El Gavilán'. Likewise, the 'guitarra traspuesta' also seems to inform about the guitar skills Parra demonstrates in those pieces as she would "make the guitar speak" through a new musical language.

Furthermore, Parra's experimentation reached beyond sound itself when she musicalized Sergio Bravo's documentary, using ekphrastic practices to musically translate the actions of a wicker-maker creating figures. Finally, we have explored Parra's most outstanding musical work, 'El Gavilán', in which she explored the possibilities offered by a multidisciplinary translation of the cultural values of rural areas of Chile through dance, music, drama, and scenography. In the visual line, Christ's crucifixion is a theme that Parra depicted three times and, interestingly, Jesus Christ's head is depicted in the same position as the one adopted by rural singers, and Parra herself when playing guitar, and whose posture she also depicted in other visual works such as in *La guitarrera* [the female-guitarist] [Figure 51].

Overall, Parra's aim was to translate popular and rural musical practices into the frames, languages and spaces that belonged to art music practitioners, such as music for solo guitar, film music and ballet. There are innumerable examples of art music composers using folk tunes and popular elements in their art. In a sense, it can be suggested that Parra felt free to do the same; to use folk elements as raw material for her own art but from her own unique perspective.

Scholarship has uncritically assumed that Parra did not have music notation knowledge and never questioned it. For example, it is interesting to note that, although Parra's father was a music teacher, who could supposedly read and write musical notation (Parra, 2011, p. 33), she never tried to use musical notation herself. It seems unlikely that Parra did not have the opportunity to learn these skills – befriending many people who did know it - raising the distinct possibility her personal choice was to simply ignore this procedure which is, as we have seen, "intended for educated people" (Parra, 1998, p.38), and part of the 'written culture', the tradition of so-called high art, and so forth. Musical notation, or the lack of it, would prove to be significant in Parra's music,

used as it was as a differentiation tool from which art music and the official culture judged and evaluated Parra's music, as we shall see in the next chapter.

In Parra's music – mainly for solo guitar - studies may draw opposite conclusions depending on which perspective is taken. Overall, most of the articles that have studied Parra's music seem to consider Parra's creations as simply and unproblematically imbued with a ubiquitous desire to achieve art music value, rather than something that could have been strategically employed. This is key for Oporto, who emphasizes and values Parra's intelligence and ideology over the traditional figure of Parra, presented as a natural genius with musical, visual and poetical virtues that are socially decontextualized by the high culture discourse. In the next chapter we shall see how Parra demonstrates a systematic use of subversive and critical discourse towards an ideological hegemony by using traditional devices.

Chapter V

I Don't Play the Guitar for Applause

Some members of colonial society, however, for reasons of place of birth, race, sex, or ill fortune, were unable to participate in Spain's utopian dream and enjoy its benefits. They found the solemnity and sanctity of the image of the New World that the colonizer projected to be an elaborated facade and an intolerable deception, and in protesting its misrepresentation, they virtually turned the New World upside down.

Julie Greer Johnson

Satire in Colonial Spanish America: Turning the New World Upside Down.

Violeta Parra's music is well-known as an alternative form of discourse for critical activism against the official representation established by the political, religious and ideological power in both Chile and Europe. The existing literature concerning this production has focused attention mainly on the textual content, but we know too little about how musical features can be used to express criticism. Furthermore, we do not know how some of this poetic criticism might be conveyed within her whole production (poetry and visual arts). Therefore, one may wonder, are there parallel or extra-textual elements that echo the activist text? Are there musical and non-musical elements working as critical devices? Is it possible to find other elements of protest beyond the words being sung? If so, how do they work? Where are they? Could they be present in other artworks by Parra? In the next pages, I will attempt to provide some answers to these questions by addressing the music scholarship as a starting point.

Music, Politics, Protest and Issues of High and Low.

When musicology was still claiming the autonomy of music, new musicology scholars stressed the significance of the cultural study of music and popular music by claiming that both should be seen as alternative narratives instead of being contrary opposites. Although classical musicology provided some context beyond the musical analysis, the growing importance of popular music in the twentieth century brought new and problematic challenges for those who scientifically studied music. This was mainly because of the multiple factors and implications peculiar to Western societies that have undergone the impact of modernization. For example, in *Studying Popular Music* (1990), Richard Middleton proposed a theory of articulation understood as a “cultural study of music” that

recognizes the complexity of cultural fields. It preserves a relative autonomy for cultural and ideological elements (musical structures and song lyrics, for example) but also insists that those combinatory patterns that are actually constructed do mediate deep, objective patterns in the socio-economic formation, and that the mediation takes place in struggle: the classes fight to articulate together constituents of the cultural repertoire in particular ways so that they are organized in terms of principles or sets of values determined by the position and interests of the class in the prevailing mode of production. (Middleton 1990, p. 9)

In this way, Middleton addressed the problems and issues when dealing with notions and categories of popular music analysis and considered that the best analytical approach must contextualize “the whole musical field”. For example, Middleton (*Ibid.*, pp. 105-106) criticizes the fact that since the nineteenth century, musicology has foregrounded, as one of its central methodologies, an idea of ‘notational centrality’ that

constrains the potentiality of music.⁷⁴ On the other hand, it tends to reify the musical score as true, and even privileges particular forms of listening. This notational centrality comes from methods, assumptions and ideologies that become problematic when applied to other kinds of music because musicology is not neutral: it emerged from the nineteenth-century German idealism that established a 'classical repertory' canon of bourgeois music based on Austro-German composers (Bach, Beethoven, etc.) and philosophical aesthetic theories. For example, Cintia Cristia (2011, p. 13), who analyses the interrelationship between the arts, highlights the "qualitative relationship of music with its visible signs, without which it could neither draw nor develop over time", claiming that for Adorno "the notation is not accidental but essential, because without it there would be no highly organized music". Nonetheless, musicological theory and vocabulary allows us to identify and evaluate musical features that are not notated in popular music.

Nineteenth-century Europe also consolidated the problematic term of 'folk' music with patriotic and national meanings that the Romantics originated (Gelbart, 2007). This is strongly linked to popular music and the "lower class in societies which are culturally and socially stratified" by an elite (Middleton, 2002, p. 128), thus establishing a socio-political dichotomy where oral/folk culture is dominated by written/art culture. In this regard, the general notion of 'folk' is seen ideologically as something that has not been imposed, and that through which 'the common people' freely express their culture, hence its perceived position as an antithesis to commercial music within capitalist society: "folk music processes are said to be continuity and oral transmission; and these are seen as characterizing one side of a cultural dichotomy, the other side of which is occupied by written culture" (Ibid.). Still, it is argued that popular music has its roots in the modernization processes of traditional societies. Old-fashioned rural populations were urbanized and then assimilated into capitalist cultural relations; this in turn boosted 'folk revivals' that were made up as a response to the threat of industrialization (Ibid., p. 129). In this sense, the notion of 'folk song' and popular music had cultural origins "in the romantic critique of industrial society; politically they derive from the bourgeoisie's attempt to make such critique comfortable, providing an ideologically functioning fantasy which can be used to counter the threat of real workers' culture" (Ibid., p. 139). Richard

⁷⁴ Philip Tagg (1987, p. 281) explains the issue of Schenkerian formalism: "this means that analysis of music using our notation system as its starting point will focus on characteristics containable within that system and on their extension into longer, graphically presentable processes (e.g. harmonic progression, sonata form). Such parameters may be particularly important in the understanding of the European art music tradition, whose notation was presumably developed to record its own idiosyncracies rather than those of, say, Maori or African-American musics".

Leppert offers another perspective on how music has been understood since the nineteenth century:

The music itself came into existence because the powerful individual of both groups [religion and aristocracy] perceived its role in maintaining their power and the modes of self-definition on which it depended. Music was an acknowledged means of establishing caste: it was a nonverbal, emotive vehicle for establishing and preserving a level of prestige sufficient to authorize and therefore help stabilize position. (Leppert, 1993, p. 43)

Thus, since the Middle Ages, the existence of music conceived outside of the boundaries delineated by the hegemony has frequently been labelled as noise (Leppert quoting Jaques Attali's notion of noise; p. 43); it has also been used as a differentiating tool of social class. Spanish-Chilean art scholar Leopoldo Castedo (1969, p. 201) has made a similar point from art history studies, claiming that the real victor of Latin American independence from Europe in the nineteenth century was the creole aristocracy who denied the 'native' craftsman, fostering a 'cultivated' French style art which was wholly imitative. Similarly, this dialectic between country and city, lower classes and bourgeoisie, was established in Latin America where

the music identified with the common person, and more specifically with the poor, minorities and the disestablished, has provided the natural stylistic symbol, even in the mainstream society, for social criticism and form protesting intolerable conditions; whereas music associated with the established order has been more likely to hew closely to a stylistic line derived from art music (Nettl and Béhague, 1990, p. 264).

Urbanization of rural music made by the working class in the context of industrialization was a common definition too for US folk music field collector Alan Lomax (1915-2002). He thought that "folk music was the music of the American "people," a category that included racial and ethnic minorities as well as the economically dispossessed and politically disenfranchised" (Donaldson, 2013, p. 59). Lomax's prolific career in radio programmes for the BBC stood "out as a unique and bold attempt to represent the experiences of society's marginalized and overlooked, and to broaden the kinds of voices and views that were given expression in the "official culture" of 1940s and 1950s' broadcasting" (Bottomley, 2015, p. 19). In London circa May 1956, Lomax recorded Violeta Parra, who is described in contextual notes as a "renowned Chilean folk singer and activist" (Equity, 2016).⁷⁵ She also gave recitals in Canning House, and befriended the English folklorist Victoria Kingsley. Parra had represented Chile at the Fifth World Youth Festival in Poland organized by the European Communist Party

⁷⁵ Online recordings were first cited by Ericka Verba (2013, p. 290).

(Vicuña, 1958, p. 74; Kerschen, 2010, p. 90). For some, Lomax promoted a politicized vision of folk music that was

Informed by left-wing ideals of pluralist democracy and cultural diversity. Not surprising for a 'folkie' in the post-war period, Lomax was long suspected of being a communist by the FBI and, later while living in the UK, by MI5. While his exact political views remain uncertain, he was most certainly a liberal progressive and an unabashed populist who believed in the dignity of the common individual and the need for all people to be treated with respect, regardless of race, gender or class. [...] In particular, Lomax saw folk music as a means through which cultural diversity could be exposed and the voices of the oppressed could find a much-needed platform to be heard. Folk song provided a window into the experience of the common people, and through listening to and appreciating it, he believed the rest of society would develop respect and understanding for those social groups. It was an Enlightenment-inspired perspective that focused on embracing multiculturalism as a way of transcending barriers of race and class, rather than dismantling them politically or economically (Bottomley, 2015, p. 5).

One of the first British scholars who studied Latin American 'committed song' was Robert Pring-Mill (1924-2005), whose research primarily focused on the historical use of literary devices in Latin American political writing. He took great interest in Pablo Neruda's committed poetry, which he considered a dominant influence on Latin American song. Pring-Mill (Fairley and Horn, 2002, pp. 10-11) noted the Marxist conception and engagement of Neruda as an activist member of the Chilean Communist Party; this led Pring-Mill to assess for himself this 'Latin American imagery' and "interpretation of the present which is designed to involve his readers actively in the reshaping of their common future". As a result of his interest in Neruda's *Canto General*, Pring-Mill engaged with social poetry and political song, reflecting on "differing 'conceptions of reality' [and] the 'techniques of representation'" in Latin American 'committed song' in the context of political events over the last forty years of the twentieth century (Ibid., pp. 7-9).

Spanish journalist Javier Martínez-Reverte (1976, p. 11) provides a fascinating account of Parra's place within the tradition of Latin American political song, claiming that she could not be a 'hits' artist because she "went further to become a carrier of the expression of her people, and in this sense, revived in herself that old concept of art which does not make the song a consumption object, but places it in society having individual functions". Martínez-Reverte (1976, p. 7) suggests poetical convergences between Parra's 'Yo canto la diferencia' [I sing the difference] and Jose Hernández' *The Gaucho Martin Fierro* (1872), connecting these authors as expressing distinctive Latin American poetics: "I have known singers that were a pleasure to hear. But they do not want to give their opinion, and they have fun singing. But I sing giving my opinion which is my way of singing" (Hernández, 1966 p. 91). Similarly, in 'Yo canto la diferencia' [track

54] Parra connected herself to the tradition of singer-songwriters who deliberately make criticism: "I do not play the guitar for applause / I sing the difference between what is true and what is false / otherwise I do not sing" (Parra, 1993, p. 139). In this way, Parra is thematically connected to the same poetic tradition as the Greeks Pindar and Homer, acting as a voice for poor people and peasants who move to industrialized cities (Martínez-Reverte, 1976, p. 12). Moreover, 'protest folk song' dates back to 1817, to a 'refalosa' song that speaks about the independent spirit of a military general, with figures such as Luis Emilio Recabarren (1876–1924), the founder of the Chilean Communist Party and the feminist movement in Chile, who sang 'protest songs' to nitrate workers while travelling through various mining towns in northern Chile (Ibid., p. 14). Neruda made an elegy of his figure in the canto 'The Liberators: Recabarren' in *Canto General*. Recabarren (Massardo, 2008, p. 33) said: "If we pushed the working-class to act on their own welfare, they would not get as good results as if they acted pushed by their own". Chilean scholar Pablo Garrido (1976, p. 87) explains that there have been activist themes in traditional music for a long time, for example, it is possible to find many subjects in the nineteenth-century cueca, described as "burlesque, historical, witty, patriotic, political, and satirical". Martínez-Reverte (1976, p. 13) identifies an old protest cueca that celebrates Manuel Balmaceda's presidential victory in 1886, highlighting the liberalism of the winner and laughing at the conservative wing. Furthermore, Martínez-Reverte (Ibid.) claims that, in 1920, the poet Carlos Pezoa Veliz (1879-1908) made his own version from the folk song 'La ausencia' in order to denounce the Santa María de Iquique massacre, in which nearly three thousand nitrate workers were brutally killed in 1907 for going on strike (Advis, 1999; Frazier, 2007, p. 117; Rivera Letelier, 2002). This is a brief context of the bountiful tradition of songs that have formed a socially engaged critique in the brief history of Chile, of which Parra's songs are part.

Politics: Ideology

The Domestic Background

Let us move on to look at aspects of Parra's personal life in order to identify some motivations for her critique. By the time Parra started to investigate Chilean oral traditions between 1948 and 1953, she had already given birth to her fourth child, Rosita Clara; the girl's father was Luis Arce, Parra's second husband and fourteen years her junior. Parra's second marriage was one of the first revolutionary actions that marked her life – something not normally perceived as a protest action within a patriarchal society which strongly limited the civil rights of women, especially those from the lower classes (Agosin

, 1987). Parra had divorced her first husband, Luis Cereceda, in 1948 because she disagreed with marriage conventions and the position of women in Chilean society, which restricted and constrained her artistic activities (Montealegre, 2011, p. 105; Parra, 2011, p. 48; Pinochet 2010, p. 78; Vilches, 2008, p. 70). Cereceda's affiliation with the Communist Party as well as politically-engaged friends boosted Parra's political participation and led the couple to organize a type of left-wing cabinet in their house to support the presidential candidacy of Gabriel González-Videla (1898-1980) of the Radical Party in 1946. Parra organized a housewives' committee to support González-Videla and penned a poem to him after his successful election (Parra, 2011, p. 45; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 44).

At this point, it is impossible to avoid the genre and feminist implications of Parra, the significance of which has been subtly incorporated as an element of study to Parra's artworks in the existing literature. For example, Carla Pinochet (2010) explains how Parra was able to establish the female figure in a traditionally masculine position, which she did through the practice of the *Canto a lo Poeta*, transgressing and questioning gender conventions. Meanwhile, Montealegre (2011, p. 104) thinks that the realization of the First Congress of the Movement for the Emancipation in 1937–38 gained key social and political importance during that period. Still, the Chilean feminist movement was one of the last to arise in Latin America. Agosín (1987, p. 20) explains how Chilean legislation regarded married women during Parra's times: "The husband has the right to oblige his wife to live with him and to follow him wherever he may wish to reside. [...] Without written authorization by the husband the married woman cannot make decisions on her own, not even through a lawyer". Parra completely refused this view of a woman's role in marriage, and although there is no song or visual craft in which she expressed this, it is clearly conveyed in her autobiography (Parra, 1998, p. 163).

In the meantime, Parra had to reconcile her personal issues with her musical career in a precarious art scene. Parra's biographical constructions show that she actively participated in politics as a result of social reforms that had incorporated the lower and working classes into politics since the 1930s, from Arturo Alessandri's first presidency onwards (Manns, 1977, p. 35; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, pp. 40-44). Parra identifies the reasons behind the socio-political issues she experienced:

Excerpt from 'Décima XVIII'

¡Válgame Dios cómo están
todos los pobres cristianos
en este mundo inhumano
partidos mitá' a mitá'!

My Lord, how they are
all the poor Christians
in this inhuman world
divided half and half

Del rico es esta maldad,
lo digo muy conmoví'a.
Dijo el Señor a María:
Son para todos las flores,
los montes, los arreboles.
¿Por qué el pudiente se olvida?
(Parra, 1998, p. 57)

Of the rich is this evil,
I say it moved.
The Lord said to Mary
the flowers are for everybody
the mountains, the afterglow
Why do the wealthy forget it?

But Parra's political and historical context was deeply conflicted, and was significantly unfavourable for her family, especially after World War I. An economic crisis had caused a decline in nitrate exports, and Parra's father, who was head of the Teachers' Union, suffered political persecution in 1927 during Colonel Carlos Ibáñez's dictatorship (Epple, 1977, p. 4; Manns, 1977, p. 35; Vilches, 2008, p. 74; Oviedo, 1990, p. 22). Having experienced these political turbulences, Parra arrived in the Chilean capital, where she saw the beginning of the Radical governments of Pedro Aguirre Cerda, Juan Antonio-Rios (1888-1946) and González-Videla that were supported by the Socialist and Communist parties between 1938 and 1952. Accordingly, many Chilean intellectuals became engaged with politics; Pablo Neruda achieved political position as a diplomat and served as a senator, so it was not unique that Parra also participated in political campaigns. Parra's songs 'La carta' [track 55], 'Santiago penando estas' [track 56], and 'Décima XXVI' describe these socio-political events, emphasizing Alessandri's government as the "bloodiest one", a time during which her brother Roberto was detained to become a Communist (Parra, 2011, p. 37).

The Cold War Background

Parra was born on 4 October 1917 in southern Chile, while Vladímir Lenin and the Bolshevik Party were leading the Russian Revolution and establishing the Soviet Union. After World War II, political and military power was concentrated in two contrasted ideologies represented by the United States, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other. In the wake of the Cuban revolution, this geopolitical struggle also led to radical actions in Latin America. A new backdrop for the Cold War period was established when the USA successfully prevented the rise of a 'second Cuba' in Chile, while Cuba and Moscow failed to export revolution to Latin America by using Che Guevara's ideas of armed violence (Brands, 2010, p. 55). In contrast, the non-violent and democratic rise of socialism and left-wing politics had strongly influenced Chile. This was crystallized in Pedro Aguirre-Cerda's 1938 presidential victory with the slogan: "We fight for the economical and spiritual freedom of our people" (Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 41). Aguirre-Cerda succeeded the chaotic governments of Alessandri, Ibáñez and

González-Videla, all of whom were strongly influenced by the USA's economic power and political ideology, prompting González-Videla to exile Pablo Neruda and thereby marking the beginning of the Cold War in Chile (Drake, 1991, p. 269; Mularski, 2014, p. 1; Oviedo, 1990, p. 18).

It was during this unstable social period in Chile when Parra started to engage closely with politics. Considering Nicanor's political stand (Benedetti, 1969) as a key influence on Violeta, I would like to add Pablo Neruda as a significant intellectual and artistic influence for reasons that will be developed here. For example, in 1953, after returning from exile and publishing *Canto General*, Neruda first introduced Violeta to his friends in his home, establishing many subsequent meetings (Parra, 2011, p. 105). Neruda was already politically experienced as he had been appointed as a diplomat to Mexico, Buenos Aires, Madrid and Barcelona. Parra, in this period, called herself "a poor communist" (Parra, 2011, p. 167). In this context, Parra apprehended the main socialist ideology of the time and began to be known as an individual of leftist ideology who admired the USSR, exemplified by a letter Parra sent in 1962:

[I]f you knew how the political machine is running on this side. [...] If you saw the patience with which the [Soviet] Eastern daily resist all kinds of [the capitalist] Western provocation. I find it strange you are not a Communist. This century is ours, Don Joaquín, it covers everything. If you could see [...] the houses where the workers live. The radio does not transmit nonsense. The university has 22,000 students. How did you not come here yet? (Parra, 2011, p. 137)

Vilches (2008, p. 75) argues that Parra's figure "coincides historically with a political and social period in which Latin America has moved from Europe to the US domain", establishing "a period when the United States deploys its market policies in Latin America, causing economic inequities that exacerbate the material and social separation between classes". On the other hand, Parra confronted a politically polarized art field in Chile because of the USA's agenda of 'nonrepresentational art in Latin America'. This took the form of promoting a 'depoliticized avant-garde art' whose aim was to counteract the revolutionary movements of Latin America that were guided by Cuba's intellectual left, through cultural and non-cultural institutions that could be read as a strategy of oppression (Dillon, 2013, p. 175). There are detailed accounts of how the CIA penetrated and influenced many cultural organizations around the world by using philanthropic institutions such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, publishing and sponsoring abstract art to counteract art with social content and subsidizing publications that criticized left-wing ideologies while valorising US policies (Scott-Smith and Krabbendam, 2004; Saunders, 1999; Romijn et al., 2012). In the visual arts, Parra thus

faced conflict not only in the 'figurative-versus-abstract' period, but also in the 'political-versus-apolitical' era. Some scholars consider this ideological manipulation of the art industry and institutions in Chile as a significant factor in the poor reception of Parra's oeuvre. However, the social implications associated with self-taught artists may have also played a key role in Parra's case, when odd assumptions and prejudices converge, as described by Gary A. Fine in *Everyday Genius: Self-Taught Art and the Culture of Authenticity* (2006). For example, even radio broadcasting in Chile was corrupted and used for political and commercial purposes by the Chilean bourgeoisie, who romanticized the imagery of folk traditions, such as the landlord image known as 'huaso', to develop a sense of 'Chilean-ness' (Dillon, 2013, p. 177; Mularski, 2014, p. 6; Parra, 1998, p. 157).⁷⁶



Figure 49, Violeta Parra, *Genocidio*, 1963–1965, papier-mâché on wood, 47 x 89.5, Fundación Violeta Parra, Santiago

Parra's visual art was strongly motivated by this ideological confrontation between the communist East and the capitalist West, so it is not surprising that some find similarities between her art and Russian socialist art, as illustrated in works such as *El Hombre*, on the one hand, and 'un-nuanced' political dialectic on the other (Dillon,

⁷⁶ According to Manns (1977, p. 41), this type of romanticised-folksong promoted by the bourgeoisie played a "demobilizing role, it was conceived as a balm that will try to hide, but the social wounds, that will move away the workers from their desire for vindication, and, for the peasant, who will work constantly, to give a kind of condescending image of the landlord who will perpetuate the tradition of the 'servant families' that are born, live and die on patriarchal haciendas (in the same way as in the Southern United States)".

2013, p.157). This ideological confrontation is illustrated in the paintings *Genocidio* [Figure 49] and *Mítin dos de abril* [Figure 50], where “the armed forces are presented as tyrannous” while “there were a lot of armed revolutionary groups in Latin America in the 1960s and Parra's binary representation does not reflect this” (Ibid., p. 146). Even more, Dillon (Ibid., pp. 156-157) highlights the influence of Mexican muralism on Parra which was also part of a socialist political agenda that is conveyed in the song ‘Los Pueblos Americanos’, concluding that “her representations of contemporary and historical political scenes are as ideologically weighted as the politically charged lyrics of her protest songs”. Furthermore, this ideological confrontation could be stronger, taking into account Parra and Neruda’s friendship. In fact, Neruda formed a deep political and artistic relationship with the muralist movement in Mexico as Consul General in Mexico City (1940-1943) and, accordingly, some have found clear relationships between *Canto General* and Mexican Muralist art by using the concept of ekphrasis which is commonly defined as “the verbal representation of a visual representation”, as explained in Chapter I (Méndez-Ramírez, 1999). Also, Dillon (2013, p. 172) argues that Parra used figurative painting as a denunciation in the same manner as her songs, creating a few powerful pieces. In this sense, songs such as ‘La Carta’ and ‘Miren cómo sonríen’ [track 57] might be depicted in paintings such as *Genocidio* [Figure 49], and *Prisionero inocente* [Figure 51]. These works illustrate brutal scenes of human figures protesting against important political events. On the other hand, *Contra la Guerra* [Figure 26], and *Mítin 2 de abril* [Figure 50], depict a pacifist protest scene. Most notably, these visual works show a remarkable pattern that might be ideologically and hence politically interpreted: Parra always places the oppressed on the left side while the oppressors are on the right side of the images. Arguably, the oppressed represent the left-wing people and the oppressors, the right-wing. This brief context provides an overview on how Parra approached and created her committed visual artworks, and offers some ideas about the implications of her interdisciplinary production.



Figure 50, Violeta Parra, *Mítin 2 de abril*, 1964, oil on fabric, 25 x 35 cm, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 51, Violeta Parra, *Prisionero inocente*, 1964, oil on wood, 31.7 x 41.5, Fundación Museo Violeta Parra collection.

Parra's Political Ideology

In Chile some newspapers are not kind to me, especially the right-wing ones from the bourgeoisie. For them the word folklore is something racist. I am a woman of the people. (...) I do not see any difference between the artist and the people.

Violeta Parra (Joanneton, 1970, p. 24).

Politics is perhaps the most popular subject in Parra's repertoire because it continually engages with terms such as 'committed song', 'protest song' and 'politically engaged work of art'. A number of texts have studied Parra's 'protest songs' as well as her literary works (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1988; Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1992; Alcalde, 1975; Cánepa, 1983; Manns, 1977; Rodríguez, 2015; Torres, 2004; Vilches, 2004). Indeed, Parra described these songs as 'revolutionary songs' (Parra, 2011, p. 172). However, it was not until Parra's final years that most of these artworks were created. Parra (I. Parra, 2011, p. 121) once declared in French: "in my country there are several political disorders. I really don't like it, and I can't protest, but I can do so with my paintings". For the New Song's generation, the 'protest song' was the armed wing of poetry in the 1960s, and was very difficult to compose because it meant dealing successfully with the inner laws of music and poetry. Chilean singer-songwriter Patricio Manns (1987, p. 192-194), who learned from Parra, talks about a "poetic text in alliance with music", and defines "four stratigraphic relations"; to the conceptual working of the poetry; to its ideology; to history; to propose possible solutions about the issues exposed. So, the text and sound have to successfully match and flow in a common consonance in order to convey a message in the 'protest song'. In the next pages, I will explore and discuss the political and ideological implications of Parra's oeuvre.

As might be expected, Parra had critics belittling her work; for example, there are many people who speak of the contempt suffered by Parra, mainly from those who had some power within the Chilean artistic world. One of the first criticisms that she encountered was of the song 'Casamiento de negros', her first success, that was recorded in the United States by Les Baxter [track 58]. Singer Gabriela Pizarro (1987, p. 44) explains that this song generated controversy among Chilean composers because she had taken a quatrain from a text by Francisco de Quevedo that had many variations and became popular in Chile, and Parra created a melody with the rhythm of 'parabién', 'completing' the text with her own words. Chilean composers did not want to

acknowledge that it was music made by Parra, accusing her of plagiarism. She defended herself, proving that some aspects of the musical form of her version were not traditional in Chilean folklore.⁷⁷ Similarly, Parra's visual oeuvre was not of interest for the head of the Contemporary Art Museum of Chile who considered her work to lack visual technique and artistic value (Agosín and Dölz-Blackbörn, 1992, p. 116). Moreover, when Parra exhibited at The São Paulo Bienal⁷⁸ and at the Louvre many claimed to have heard people downplaying the achievement (Oviedo, 1990, p. 73). In fact, Parra (Ehrmann, 1964, p. 30) declared her joy when she saw Germán Gassman, the organizer of the Feria de Artes Plásticas [Chile], entering her exhibition and listening to the same 'cuecas' he had tried to silence when exhibiting her arpilleras in Chile: "I told him: 'these are the same arpilleras I exhibited at the Mapocho river!' [while playing cuecas]".

As we have seen, the Chilean scholarship – mainly literary - has provided a good historical review of politically committed songs in Chile and explaining how Parra is linked to those songs that expose social issues, reaching back to the Independence period of Chile in the eighteenth century. For example, literary scholar Juan A. Eppele (1979, p. 193) noted that the creole bourgeoisie has systematically denied these types of songs because they expose the inconsistencies of their country, imposing "their own schemes of valuation of the past labelling as a tradition only that which was in accordance with their ideology, and especially with its conception of art as an unproblematic manifestation, and disconnected from the contingencies of history". Overall, this led to Parra's social and political folksongs being perceived as an isolated case by the masses. Similarly, Christian Uribe (2002) raises an interesting issue regarding the complexity faced by scholars in categorizing Parra's music within the frames of art, popular and folklore. He (Ibid., p.12) explains that this has been rather an ideological problem faced by the creole elite who write the official history, by excluding all those 'popular' cultures that do not match the parameters established by hegemony. This is clear in Parra's solo guitar works and 'El Gavilán': on the one hand, they cannot be regarded as folk because they are not traditional dances and because they move between the modal and tonal systems of composition. On the other hand, they are not art music either, because Parra did not have this type of musical training. This led some scholars to say that Parra's music for solo guitar and 'El Gavilán' has elements of a true 'high art', as expressed by Alfonso Letelier (Ibid., p. 11), which implies at the same time that the rest of the Parra's oeuvre did not have such elements. This idea was taken further by Aravena (2004) who

⁷⁷ Margot Loyola recorded her own version of 'Casamiento de negros' in 1960 [track 59]

⁷⁸ Isabel Parra (2011, p. 253) claims it was the Modern Art Museum in Rio de Janeiro.

criticized high art narratives from academia, though without mentioning Uribe's article. British musicologist Philip Tagg has questioned and criticized this from a wider perspective, warning that academia was facing a growing issue “denoting what is ‘left over’ after ‘serious’ art music and ‘authentic’ folk music have been taken care of”:

It is with musicology that our problems start. The vast majority of music in our society falls under neither of the headings ‘art’ or ‘folk’ - the traditionally legitimate areas of serious music studies - the only current terms available for denoting the music most used by most people being *mesomusica* or popular music. (Tagg, 1987, pp. 280-281)

In her comprehensive study of ‘El Gavilán’, Oporto (2013, pp. 71-84) devotes a lot of space to criticizing those scholars who downplay Parra’s art, stating that these opinions are the result of the standardized ideological limitations of a reductionist and Euroclassical Chilean academy in the service of economic neoliberalism. For example, Oporto (Ibid., p. 75) strongly criticizes music scholar Juan Pablo González (2005, p. 205) for saying that “the anticuecas did not achieve a new artistic language” because “to enter the Parnassus of the Latin American guitar music, Violeta Parra eventually would have needed the help of musical notation”. What this denotes, claims Oporto, is the competitive, exclusionary, and elitist criteria of institutional superiority that is not interested in the deep implications of Parra's music but in its serviceability, downplaying all merit and even rejecting in this way all musicological tools to evaluate Parra’s music. This explains why González agrees with Spencer (2000, pp. 10-11) when the latter claims that “there is not a systematic musical thought in Violeta, but rather a ubiquitous musical genius” derived from the guitar’s idiomatic features as explanation of Parra’s music for solo guitar output. I agree with Oporto’s (2013, p.80) criticism of Spencer’s rejection of the musicological analysis of Parra's guitar works – on the grounds that they do not fit Eurocentric musicological concepts - and explanation of their originality and success being due to her “self-managing ability” within the culture industry:

[T]heir musical and textual form [of Parra’s instrumental music], as well as its composition, still lack analytical territory because its musical discourse goes beyond both the analytic tools of art music and those of traditional or vernacular folklore. It is necessary to have instruments of analysis capable of situating oneself in the interaction of formal, harmonically and motivically traditional music and non-traditional language music, an area in which we still do not find adequate methodologies. Notwithstanding this lack, we will try to approach some musical and contextual features of these works by Violeta, understood as a manifestation of an ‘inside-out’ double relationship between her and the cultural milieu in which she lived. (Spencer, 2000, pp. 6-7)

Unfortunately, Spencer - as well as González and Aravena - seems to be more interested in finding ideal academic concepts and consequently to neglect the features and qualities of these works, rather than considering them as a starting point of research, and finding

ways to understand them by using existing methodology.⁷⁹ For example, Oporto (2013, p.80) is also right when observing that Spencer does not explain the idiomatic features of art music composers such as Villa-Lobos, William Walton (1902-1983) and Roland Dyens (1955-2016), who composed works for solo guitar, nor explain the difference between Parra's and those composers' works, downplaying and simplifying Parra's guitar-work with reference to "a certain mechanical and intelligent 'efficiency' in the gestation of a harmonious multi-sound atmosphere where intervals become colors" (Spencer, 2000, p. 9). Spencer effectively describes the features and differences between what he calls 'folk-root songs', 'film music' and 'instrumental music', highlighting the uniqueness and complexity of the third. However, he states that Parra's songs and film music are a result of a systematic and deliberate strategy of self-management within the recording industry:

The[se three types of] music composed by Violeta, mentioned above, were disseminated through various media (disc, radio, press, documentaries) and are part of a conscious promotion strategy carried out in a non-profit manner but systematic by the folklorist; a deliberate display of perfect knowledge of the media of her time. This is important to emphasize especially in Chile, where popular knowledge seems to obviate all the self-managing ability that the folklorist and ceramist possessed. [...] Meanwhile, those instrumental works were always far from the average due to their abstract nature and their musical ubiquity. (Spencer, 2000, p. 7)

This statement raises questions such as, is he obviating or displaying his bias in his opinion of Parra's ability to compose instrumental music just for not being part of the art music realm, in the same way as he criticizes Chilean society for obviating Parra's self-management ability? Furthermore, does Parra's instrumental music not have a coherent, deliberate and consistent strategy? What Spencer seems to forget when labelling Parra's guitar works as "a ubiquitous musical genius" is that idiomatic features such as moving the left hand by just using fixed positions through the guitar neck correspond to the main feature of what I described before as the singer's guitar skills of the 'guitarra traspuesta' in rural areas of Chile who "make the guitar speak"; and what Oporto (2013, p. 81) correctly identifies as the Canto a lo Poeta practice. Although I agree with Spencer (2000, p.12) when claiming that Parra's guitar works were not conceived or composed from the traditional written structures of art music, I disagree with the idea that art music methodological tools cannot be used to study and analyse Parra's guitar works merely because she does not have a "systematic [high art] musical thought" (Ibid., p. 10). I

⁷⁹ Philip Tagg pointed out that traditional art music analysis cannot be the only methodological tool for studying popular music but must be considered as a complementary tool because there are multiple codes and symbols involved, in the same way as Middleton defined it (Tagg, 1987).

strongly disagree with that idea and I am going to demonstrate how art music tools may illustrate how Parra translates poetics in the section titled 'Music as a mirror of society'.

What most of these critiques have in common is the fact that Parra put a type of artistic expression that belonged to a space and context outside the official art in an institutionalized artistic space, which naturally generated tension because she did not belong there. In other words, the artistic institutions (academies, museums, etc.) witnessed how a person who did not belong to that official medium could occupy their spaces, and achieve valorisation, visibility, popularity, and finally, transcendence. These accounts show the problematic relationships between 'art' and 'folk' music in Chile and further afield cultural implications: "Both condemnation and neglect, on the one hand, and misunderstanding, on the other, are motivated by hierarchically understood differences of 'cultural class'" (Middleton, 2002, p.105).

As I have pointed out, the existing musicological articles have addressed Parra's music - especially instrumental music and 'El Gavilán' - from the historical high-art tradition, which have not even mentioned Parra's activist ideology, and therefore have assumed that her political activism is naively and unproblematically limited to textual criticism. Could Parra's oeuvre have been critically provocative instead of innocently aiming for high-art recognition and legitimation? As we shall see in the next pages, there is plenty of evidence suggesting that Parra's ideological and political activism were expressed beyond her song's texts and poetry, and that they seem to be rather strategically and subversively employed. For example, the letter 'August 12, the day of my mum' – first chapter - depicts Parra's awareness about her oeuvre status within a socially divided context. As Parra suffered an accident that left her with no movement of her left-hand little finger, she says that simplicity guides her nine fingers to create her visual crafts in the same way as the nine low-ranking soldiers do in her anticueca's guitar. Likewise, Parra herself realized this issue during her period of research, when she had to ask her friend Soubllette for musical transcriptions. It was even written in her 'Décima VIII'. Therefore, one can state that, the absence of musical knowledge enables her to do 'concert music' in a distinctive way.

Excerpt from 'Décima VIII'

Sentencia de doble multa
es no saber pentagrama.
Si en el mate arde una llama
destiná' pa' gente culta,
en el cerebro me abulta
causándome confusión,
y al toque del guitarrón

Double-fine sentence
It is the lack of musical notation
If a flame burns inside the head
intended for educated people
it grows in the brain
causing me confusion
and by playing the guitarrón

le voy cambiando el estilo
por un concierto pililo
que alegra mi corazón
(Parra, 1998, p. 38)

I'm changing the style
for a humble concert
that gladdens my heart

Likewise, Parra's arpilleras “undermine the authority of the oil painting and the hegemony of high art and its patrons at the same time as they employ the linguistic strategies of these sectors in order to position themselves in the realm of the hegemonic” (Dillon, 2013, p. 224). Accordingly, Parra’s visual work challenged art ideology during the 1960s by conveying anti-intellectual and pacifist messages through undervalued mediums, at a time when movements like Abstraction, New Realism and Pop Art dominated Europe (Ibid., p. 173). Meanwhile in Latin America the artistic environment was divided between abstract and figurative movements, as I mentioned before. Furthermore, in the mid-twentieth century, museums and other official cultural institutions were strongly associated with capitalism; in this context, Parra burst on the space, questioning the traditional notion of the canvas hanging in the museum by exhibiting arpilleras in an outdoor art exhibition, singing, dancing and cooking herself, but also making anti-art messages by the use of recycled materials as shown in her papier-mâché sculptures (Ibid., p. 174) [Figure 44].

Thus, Parra seems to be totally aware of the implications of this on Chilean society, where the elite have been intellectually, economically and artistically identified with European cultural models, following its trends, while the Chilean and Latin American models were deemed worthless (Castedo, 1969, p. 201; Epple, 1977, p. 2; Mularski, 2014, p. 4; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 80). For example, on the one hand, Parra knew and used, to some extent, the hegemonic language of ‘art music’ as the ‘Décima VIII’ and ‘El Gavilán’ demonstrate, to “undermine the authority”, to quote Dillon, despite not knowing how to write a score. On the other hand, ‘El Gavilán’ demonstrates a certain knowledge of the hegemonic art music language. Once again, this shows an understanding of this issue as poles of conflict between ‘cultivated’ art and popular art. She writes her autobiography in the same manner; she apologizes for not having enough ‘capacity’ to write in the correct way of the verse and literary tradition. Thus, Parra wrote that she was well aware of the value of a sonata. However, whoever played a sonata, in spite of being knowledgeable of art music “has turbid eyes” (I. Parra, 2011, 164-165). Also, it makes clear the socio-cultural issue of music knowledge as a differentiation tool in Violeta’s times (Uribe, 2004).

Excerpt from ‘Reflexiones’ [Reflections]

Conozco tus intenciones

I know your intentions

Cascabel de la mañana	morning Cascabel
Por cada nota me pillas	For every note you find me
Mis suspiros y mis lágrimas	My sighs and my tears
Es verdad que hasta el arrullo	It is true that even the cooing
De la paloma no es nada	Dove is nothing
Delante de tus bemoles	Before your flats
Corcheas, fusas y blancas	Quavers demisemiquavers and minims
Pero no es para lanzarse	But not to launch
De tanta altura en el agua	From so high in the water
No creas tú que yo ignoro	do not think I ignore
Lo que vale una sonata	The value of a sonata
Tu música puede ser	Your music can be
Más pura que las cascadas	Purer than the waterfalls
Pero quien la está tocando	But who is playing it
Tiene turbia la mirada	Has turbid eyes
(Parra, 2011, pp. 164-165)	

Violeta Parra's usage of and reference to 'art music' language has been clear but also quite enigmatic, because she expressed - translated - it poetically in words, but also in visual works, as the painting titled *Fugue* and some figures depicted in other work demonstrate. Still, Parra creatively translated her own type of fugue into the instrumental piece titled 'Tocata y fuga' [track 60] for quena and drum whose subtitle is 'northern style' - making reference to the Andean style. Although the melody is played by Gilbert Favre on quena, and Parra on drum, the credits are given to Parra as a composer as with all the tracks. Yet, Favre's reputed knowledge of art music must be stressed, flamenco, and jazz (A. Parra, 2006, p.19; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976. p. 97). Favre may have had influence, to some extent, over the outcome of this particular form which stands as one of the most significant and challenging forms of instrumental art music. As expected, the instrumental piece does not have any relation to classical forms beyond its title. Overall, the 1:50-minute piece can be divided into two parts; in the first, a melody is played in a slow rhythm which later turns to a faster tempo, underpinning melodic material with regular antecedents and consequents. Once again, Parra challenges received wisdom about music in the same way as she does in 'El Gavilán'.

Music scholar Cristian Guerra (2012, pp. 18-19), provides further – and surprising - insights into Parra's works in the 'academic sphere'; claiming that 'Gracias a la vida' [track 61] is a national and universalized Chilean and Latin American canonical song (Merino, 2006, p. 30) that is the "the most-referenced Chilean piece of music" in the *Revista Musical Chilena's* chronicles since 1976. This academic journal was "conceived at its inception (1945) as a means to promote academic music" and its composers. But more interestingly, Guerra (2012, p.19) notes that "all these references, with one exception, refer to versions, arrangements, transcriptions or covers of the song, preferably presented in spaces rather linked to academic music and concert halls, halls

of universities, theaters, etc.”. This is worth highlighting because, on the one hand, there is an implicit good-valuing from the [hegemonic] art music side, acknowledging the originality and beauty of 'Gracias a la Vida's music, text, melody, etc. But, on the other hand, it also shows that the hegemonic art music has needed to use its own art music tools such as instrumentation, orchestration, or even musical variations to validate the song, rather than the original version in its original context. Parra carried out many activities in Chilean universities – mainly workshops - and was hired as a researcher for the University of Concepción and for the Northern Catholic University (Vicuña, 1958, p. 77). But there were controversies too, such as one that took place in the hall of honour at the University of Chile when Parra presented her album *La Cueca* because she had invited circus people to perform on it. While some university workers felt it was wrong, the audience in a full room applauded effusively (Parra, 2011, p. 84). Soublette, describes Parra's reception in Chile's academic sphere:

Many looked at her unfavourably because they said she was not a researcher. And that was true. [...] Violeta did not have a scientific method of research. If she did, she might have had a much lower profile life, with a professorship at the university, and perhaps a reputation as a musicologist specialising in folk music but would not have been the Violeta Parra that we know. She vehemently criticized the professional deformation of the scholar who looks at things so distantly, with purely technical criteria. (Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 69)

Furthermore, there were many anthropologists from the elite who researched Chilean folklore before Parra, such as Rodolfo Lenz or Carlos Isamitt⁸⁰ (1885-1974) - who used folklore as raw material in art music - which led to the creation of the Instituto de Investigaciones del Folklore Musical in the University of Chile in 1943. Isamitt's oeuvre has some similarities to Parra's as he researched rural cultures during the 1930s in central and southern Chile, later published in magazine articles (Vicuña, 1966). Still, Isamitt's artistic career differs from Parra's because of his academic contributions that led him to actively participate in reforms for artistic education. Overall, the academic approach of folk music ethnography in Chile led them to keep all this research confined to libraries, according to Eurocentric canons, but with a markedly 'outsider' approach towards 'the people' (León-Villagra and Ramos-Rodillo, 2011, p. 26; Mularski, 2014, p. 8; Oviedo, 1990, p. 45; Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 71). Instead, Parra used her research to create and disseminate Chilean oral culture around the world, problematizing and defying again the ideology of high and low art, classical and popular music, academic and non-academic. For example, Vilches (2008, p. 75) concludes that

⁸⁰ Carlos Isamitt studied music and art at the same time, and became dean of the National Museum of Fine Arts in 1928. He was probably one of the first interdisciplinary artists in Chile, in whose oeuvre *Friso Araucano* (1931), for orchestra and voice, and the oil on canvas *Trilla* [Appendix 23] are highlights.

Parra's *Décimas* is an unprecedented literary work that does not fit within the Chilean academic canons. In light of that, both Dillon and Oporto seem to agree that "the derision that Parra's art found in Chile" was because of "widespread prejudice against folk culture, [but also] elitism and an ideologically motivated institutional bias in the Chilean arts" (Dillon, 2013, p. 175), rather than because of its lack of visual technique, perspective, colours, etc., as claimed by some in Chile (Subercaseaux and Londoño, 1976, p. 102; Agosín and Dölz-Blackbürrn, 1992, pp. 116-120). Finally, I would add a gender issue raised by Dillon (2013, p. 212) who stresses the influence of stereotypes within a patriarchal Chilean society by quoting Kemy Oyarzun, who thinks that traditionally "the place of woman is 'in the other': the place of 'heart', 'pleasure' and 'intuition', the antithesis of the sphere of 'mind', 'reason' and 'work'. There, women are repressed and even led to a condition of being denied". This genre stereotyping seems to be not so different to some claims (Vicuña, 1958, p. 71; González, 2016; Letelier, 1967, p. 109; Morales, 2003, p. 47; Spencer, 2000, p. 2) that tend to highlight the intuitive talent of Parra's artwork, probably because she was self-taught and from a rural background.

In Chile, Parra was seen as a singer-songwriter who promoted and performed rural practices of music, poetry and visual crafts within a growing society in which the recording industry strongly shaped and labelled these arts. For example, in 1959, Parra herself explained and exposed the difference between what the radio promoted as folk and what she found in rural areas of Chile [track 62]:

Recording albums and winning a Caupolican [prize, led people to think that] the problem of the Chilean folklore was thus solved. Just the opposite; the work became harder and more intense every day. It is true that I managed to make my way, but before me and at the same time, I had dozens of radio groups of modern music that almost completely dominated the artistic scene. It was absurd to think that with my modest guitar I would be able to counteract Los [Huasos] Quincheros and their famous boleros

[and plays an excerpt of the bolero 'Nosotros']

Nor could I imagine myself facing the famous group Fiesta Linda with its also famous tune

[and plays an excerpt of the song 'Echame a correr la Bola']

And much more difficult for me was even those famous couplets by [Nicanor] Molinari:

[and plays an excerpt of the song 'La Copucha']

As you can see it has been totally difficult for me to face these true giants of modern music. It is true that many understand the effort that is made to promote our music. But until this moment they are really few. I need the support of each one of you ... (Parra, 2014h, track 8)

Although it may seem that Parra is offering a dramatized performance of modesty in order to enact a 'David against Goliath'-like struggle against the growth of the commercial song, Parra was conveying a key issue: the tension between the [hegemonic] city and the [subaltern] rural. This is also shown in a magazine article from 1954, a moment in which Parra started to become 'popular', in which she (ECRAN, 1954, p. 18) describes the three styles of folklore: "There are different ways of singing our folklore, and several of them are pleasing and accurate: popular style (Marta Pizarro), stylized (Esther Sore[track 63]) and purely folkloric (Violeta Parra)". It is within this musical business context, and in comparison, to these singers - and their music - that Parra was considered to be 'authentic'. As I have explained before, this was mainly because she decided to, let us say, 'compete' in the recording business and in radio by showing rural practices such as the *Canto a lo Poeta* singing [track 36], and the 'Muerte del angelito' service, which in the context of the 1950s was decidedly unorthodox and strange. As Soubllette (I. Parra, 2011, p. 77) explains, "what was usually presented as Chilean folklore was rather a commercial export product than the true popular culture". If we recall Leonidas Morales's (2003, p. 34) proposal, which could circumvent a utopian search for 'the authentic', to understand Parra's oeuvre "within the frame of the conflictive relationships between the urban and peasant cultures established by the Chilean bourgeois industrial society" it becomes clear that the word 'authentic' was used to describe the song type that sought to represent the unofficial practices of rural Chile, such as the songs she translated in *Cantos Folkloricos Chilenos* – which were opposed to the urbanized 'folk song' of the radio which represented a 'singer' from the official culture – which held the [economic] power – who neither sang nor performed in rural areas of Chile, except for some occasion when the landlord could hold a celebration. Moreover, in his seminal article 'Singing the difference: Violeta Parra and Chilean song', music scholar Rodrigo Torres describes the features and main subjects of Parra's 'new authenticity', whose foremost aim was to expose and challenge what the mainstream media regarded as Chilean folk song:

To a large extent Violeta Parra is the emergence of a new version of the genre 'popular Chilean song with folk root' in the circuit of the local music industry. In its germinal phase, its basic gesture was to be the negation, through contrast of 'musica típica' which at the time represented the dominant stylistic matrix on the popular song circuit (in performance technique, vocal and instrumental arrangement styles and repertory). The reclaiming of a hidden authenticity was to be the antinomy of an aesthetic of the simulation of the pretty in which formal values were preponderant. This renewal of the genre was to be represented as the construction of a new authenticity, consolidating a new aesthetic. (Fairley and Horn, 2002, p. 54)

Oporto (2013, pp. 99-100), devotes an entire chapter titled 'Una nueva autenticidad' [A new authenticity], quoting Torres' concept, to outline the social implications of class difference in Parra's 'new' aesthetic because "The typical Chilean music was based on the agrarian-peasant tradition, recognized as the representative culture of Chile". It has been suggested that the figure of the ranch was used to formulate the symbolic paradigm 'of the employer's power', and establish it as 'the epicenter of an idyllic representation of the past', devoid of social conflicts" (Manns, 1977, p. 41). Accordingly, many agree that Parra's authenticity is given and based on the Canto a lo Poeta practice, whose main feature is its popular Christianity understood as 'the religiosity of the oppressed'; quoting Rodrigo Torres's (Fairley and Horn, 2002, p. 51) characterization of this religiosity as "deeply distanced from the Church", and its representatives. In fact, Parra's last recordings show another point of view about her earlier position and how the popular wisdom is managed by the church, hence Parra's religiousness turned into a more critical view such as in her songs "Qué dirá el Santo Padre" [What will the Holy Father say] [track 64], of which Parra also composed a version for solo guitar [track 65], "Qué vamos a hacer" [What shall we do?] [track 66] and "La víspera de san Juan" [San Juan's Eve] [track 67]. Equally, Parra's visual art is also used to represent this religiosity of the oppressed. For example, the cross on the bottom right side of the arpillera *Fresia y Caupolicán* [Figure 30], makes direct reference to this critique as the repression against the Mapuche is carried out in the presence of the Catholic representatives whose complicity makes them responsible too. Similarly, this is the case in the arpillera *Contra la guerra* [Figure 28] where there is a cross in the bottom of the black rifle that seems to kill a bird.



Figure 52, Violeta Parra, 1964, *Cristo en Bikini*, cotton sewn and embroidered with wool, 161.5 x 125 cm, Fundación Violeta Parra collection.



Figure 53, Violeta Parra explaining her arpillera *La Revolte des Paysans* for the Swiss television in 1965.

Likewise, we can state that the 'religiosity of the oppressed' is also translated into her arpillera *Cristo en bikini* [Figure 52], where Parra desacralizes the traditional depiction of Jesus Christ by bringing a contingent satire "to refer to the loincloth as 'bikini', just in the days when the new swimsuit for women is being condemned by the Catholic bishop of Valparaíso" (Montealegre, 2011, p. 46). Emilio Tagle who prohibited its use "threatening the penalty of excommunication to women who exhibited with that garment in his diocese" (Ibid.). Still, this arpillera is quite a challenging and irreverent piece whose implications go beyond parochial Chilean issues. For example, a criticism of the development of weapons of mass destruction, suggesting that this Christ might be at the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, where nuclear tests were made and atomic and hydrogen bombs were detonated between the years 1946 and 1958 by the United States (Ibid., p. 47).⁸¹ Again, this also reminds us of the pictorial criticism depicted by Escámez in his mural [Figure 29] which depicts a man seeing the image of a bomb. In fact, Parra's political activism was clear when, speaking in French, she (Parra, 2014k, track 3) explained the arpillera *La greve des paysans* [Figure 53], again criticising the oppression suffered by rural people like her grandfather: "I did it because I was not happy. My grandfather was a peasant who carried out all the field work and his employer paid him almost nothing, very little, like most of the peasants of Chile, to this day. This reality impelled me to do this work because it angers me, and I cannot sit idly by."

Oporto approaches the political implications of Parra's 'El Gavilán', the text of which metaphorically represents power and capitalism.⁸² Ideologically, concludes Oporto (2013, p. 380), 'El Gavilán', is framed within the Marxist tradition of philosophy because it problematizes social inequality, class struggle and political consciousness associated with the labour movement, and is religiously framed within the so-called 'liberation theology'. Thus, Oporto proposes interpreting Parra's 'El Gavilán' from two methods: from what she calls 'archeology of the soul' based on René Girard's notion of persecution text, and on the other hand, based on Carl Gustav Jung's concept of synchronicity, which integrates his theory of the archetypes and the collective

⁸¹ Montealegre (2011, p. 46) claims that this interpretation is derived from Parra's civic commitments; she actively participated in a 'Comité por la Paz' [peace committee] and in the Festival For Peace and Friendship' held in Finland in 1962, and directly links the pacifist meaning of the tapestry *Contra la guerra*.

⁸² It is worth underlining the criticism made by Oporto (2013, p. 379) who strongly questions the way Violeta has "become an exotic trophy for the owners of Chile, with the complicity of the Violeta Parra Foundation and the depraved indolence of the Chilean state."; warning the readers that she decided not to use the word 'Parra' throughout her book in order to dissociate Violeta from her transformation into a brand image, which occurred after her death, from the creation of the Fundación Violeta Parra onwards.

unconscious, proposing that piece as a prefiguration of the 1973 coup d'état, fascism and neoliberalism. The only criticism I have of Oporto's study is that I would not interpret 'El Gavilán' as a prefiguration symbol of Pinochet's dictatorship but rather I would connect it to Parra's early political experiences as the USA's economic power and political hegemony in Chile started to grow. Consequently, some authors strongly criticise those who think Parra lacks political ideology, reasoning, intellectual reflection and argumentation, and at the same time superficially link the notion of the popular to naiveté and simplicity because by "restricting her pain to her biography, to her intimate passions, isolating her from the social life that she lives and observes, is to reduce/detract her message" (Montealegre, 2011, p. 94):

The tritone, constitutes the core of El Gavilán's formal structure. Violeta uses it in a systematic and organized way. This contradicts the generalized assumption, established to neutralize and trivialize its political and intellectual dimension, according to which [Violeta] would have created her works spontaneously, without any preparation, a thought, or a conscious deliberation. According to scheme C of chapter 5, the tritone expresses four facets here: 1. The violence of El Gavilán, as the representation of the devil, through what in the present study is called *cueca feroz* [ferocious *cueca*]. 2. The pain and suffering of the victim. 3. The siege of the community. 4. The homicidal violence and the agony of the victim, through what is here called *rasgueo homicida* [homicidal strumming]. From the point of view of the subject's post mortem, and 'I posthumously', the use of the tritone in El Gavilán expresses three facets: 1. the violence of evil. 2. The consciousness that opposing evil is capable of expressing horror and [sic] pain. 3. The conscience that, in its fight against alienation, is against the prohibition to give account of the presence of evil and to express pain. (Oporto, 2013, pp. 139-140)

In fact, Parra's 'El Gavilán' has literal political and ideological implications, as expressed by Parra (2014b, track 1) herself: "the main theme is love, which usually destroys. The main characters are 'El Gavilán' that represents the man, and the hen that represents the woman who suffers the negative consequences of the Gavilán's actions, which represent power and capitalism".

Ideologically, Parra also literally challenges the paradigm of ballet music, traditionally played by an orchestra, by including indigenous and local instruments such as the *trutruca* [Mapuche wind instrument], harps and guitars in the musical orchestration. Even more, Parra (Ibid.) also challenges the suitability and quality of a trained voice, stating that "this text has to be sung by myself. Because the pain cannot be sung by a conservatory-trained voice. It has to be a suffered-voice like mine which has been suffering for forty years. Therefore, it has to be as real as possible." [track 68]. This statement is quite revealing in the deepest sense of Parra's translation idea because we can interpret it literally as trying to transpose and embody forty years of real suffering through her voice; whereas the trained voice may simply aspire to imitate an unlive

suffering in favour of a supposedly pure musical tone. It seems that she might have had a similar understanding of voice as vehicle for unmediated experience, but it also might be read as an ideological position, critique, and social challenge against the official voice trend that dictates who sings well and who does not. This reminds us of the well-known comparison made by Roland Barthes (1977, p. 183) between the German singer Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and the Swiss-French singer Charles Panzéra, by arguing that “the whole of [the official] musical pedagogy teaches not the culture of the ‘grain’ of the voice but the emotive modes of its delivery”. Barthes (Ibid., pp. 182-183) notes that the German singer embodies a voicing style in which “everything in the (semantic and lyrical) structure is respected and yet nothing seduces” and whose “art is inordinately expressive” because what is highlighted are “all the features which belong to the structure of the language being sung, the rules of the genre, the coded form of the melisma, the composer’s idiolect, the style of the interpretation”. On the contrary, the French singer would embody “the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue” that he calls ‘the grain in the voice’ because what stands out “is the volume of the singing and speaking voice, [...] where melody explores how the language works and identifies with that work” (Ibid.). Richard Elliott (2015, p. 44) provides a clearer interpretation of this distinction, by arguing that this difference would not be based on the technical perfection of the voice but on a voicing style that achieves “a more intimate relationship between listener and speaker/voice”. For Elliott (Ibid., p. 41) the voicing style “is always ‘late’” because “it is the result of experience, imitation, and repetition” that leads to singers such as Parra deliberately acknowledging such differentiation as a something valuable: “To have a voice is to have a sense of power”. Parra’s voice and voicing style were indeed very different to her contemporaries and perceived as “alien to the artistically correct” (Fairley and Horn, 2002, p. 46).⁸³ This was stated in her interview for the *Revista Musical Chilena*, where the rareness, strangeness and peculiarity of the source from which Parra represented and performed is highlighted:

In her recordings made in all regions of Chile, Violeta Parra has picked up the strange voices of elders and young people who [sing the Canto a lo Divino repertoire], with melodies of graceful rhythms and charming simplicity, describe the creation and destruction of the world [for example] A guttural voice recites in a poem, long as the deed of Mío Cid, the story of Charlemagne and the twelve peers of France. Another with the authority of a prophet, sings the vanity of the wisdom of the ‘earthly planet’ and mocks the wise men who ‘to give proof take ink, paper and instrument. (Vicuña, 1958, pp. 71-72)

⁸³ Fernando Sáez (2017 p. 39) claims that “Violeta’s voice was not, precisely, common. Tuned, somewhat rough, it went out of the usual canons.” He also claims that one of the most outstanding features that impressed the selected audience at Neruda’s home recital in 1953, was her ‘strange, rough and grim’ voice, resulting in divided opinions (Ibid. p.72).

This is how Ricardo García remembers first encountering Parra in 1954 as Radio Chilena was inaugurated, and he had to head a program on folk music with her, despite his knowing barely anything about folk:

One day this woman came to the radio, which was then, for the radio world, a kind of ghost from another world. [...] We began to talk about what the program should be like. I had not heard her sing before, I did not know who she was. [...] We went to the studio where she had her guitar and she began to sing, and the people who were in the control room approached; some a little frightened, amazed. It was a totally different type of song, nobody knew that style, that way of singing. Some laughed, others said: "how is it possible to let a person who does not know how to emit the voice sing," etc. All kinds of adverse comments by some and, by others, great admiration and interest. It was something really different. This type of folk song had not been performed in Chile. Only the duets of the Loyola sisters did something similar. (Parra, 2011, p. 58)

Isabel Parra (2011, p. 64) also remembers a similar situation when her mother sang the *Canto a lo Divino* repertoire, songs very different to the folk music broadcast by Chilean radio, mainly because of its simplicity as mentioned before, and she heard one of the most popular Chilean singers of the twentieth century, Esther Soré, asking: "between surprised and disappointed, who this woman was, and whether the songs were comical or serious. [...] it made them get confused, it caused them rejection. Many times, the Viola [Parra] was the victim of teasing and sarcasm". From an academic perspective, Soubllette (Ibid., p. 79) contends that this "style of singing, of a more continuous and homogeneous emission, and almost without vibrato, is precisely what has characterized the type of voice emission appropriate for the singing of all the authentic folkloric traditions of the world," establishing a quality of differentiation from the modern commercial folk song because it was linked to an ancient medieval form of singing. Parra's voice therefore was seen as very different not just because of its simplicity and untrained manner of singing, characteristic of unwritten culture, but also because of the themes in her material which offer a critique of wide-ranging issues around morality and ethics, framed within oppressed religiosity. Because of that critical approach of singing, Soubllette (Parra, 2013, p. 13) acknowledges that "Violeta Parra revealed to me, and guided me in discovering the traditional wisdom of our people. Without her influence I would have remained a Chilean who admires foreign culture and ignores that of his own nation".

Turning the World Upside-Down

So far, we have explored in detail many of Parra's works, but more importantly, we have explored the motivations and context behind them: the tension between the official Chile and its unofficial counterpart. In that sense, it is Parra's critical stance that is highlighted if we extend and apply her textual critique to her oeuvre as a whole coherent and unitary discourse. Once we acknowledge this critical attitude, its possible sources are raised. In the next pages I shall attempt to place Parra's critical poetics within an ancient tradition by exploring these historical connections. *Mundus inversus*, *The World Turned Upside Down* (Hill, 2008), *Verkehrte Welt* (Geyer, 1998), *Le Monde à L'Envers* (Hani, 2001), *El Mundo al Revés* (Wilson, 1973) are some of the terms given to a subject and metaphor commonly used in ancient Western literature and popular art to not only invert but critically subvert the established social order and hierarchy. Mikhail Bakhtin made a significant contribution to understanding the poetic development of the 'world turned upside down' (hereafter WTUD) device as social criticism. In his influential book *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin focused on the carnival - or carnivalesque - as derived from Socratic dialogues and Menippean satire, which gave expression to the notion of an organized collectivity challenging socio-political hegemonies:

All the symbols of the carnival idiom are filled with this pathos of change and renewal, with the sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities. We find here a characteristic logic, the peculiar logic of the 'inside out' (à l'envers), of the 'turnabout', of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 11)

Similarly, from art history, Pieter Bruegel's famous *Netherlandish Proverbs* (1569) is thought to depict WTUD, not just because his canvas features a globe upside down (Kunzle, 1977), but because it imparts political, social, religious and moral criticism to traditional situations. David Kunzle (1977, p. 202) claims that "Many of Bruegel's *Proverbs* relate to cheating and reflect the manner in which the upper classes project their own Machiavellian morality onto the lower classes". Overall, Kunzle suggests that the *Netherlandish Proverbs* [Appendix 24] should not be seen as simple allegories of 'universal human folly' but rather as a social criticism of the upper classes, monopoly capitalism, and the worldly corruption suffered by the lower classes. Similarly, Wim Vroom (2010) provides early examples of this poetic device in Northern Europe art, describing how the WTUD motif was used as a visual and textual device to portray the revolt against Spanish rule in the city of Antwerp in the sixteenth century. Interestingly, the artists Marten van Cleve and Willem de Haecht created prints and broadsheets that allegorically compared the Spanish oppressors with the oppressed native Flemish

population by depicting the figures of a greedy wolf and a sleepy lion. Vroom analyses how a print titled *De Verheer de Weerelt* (1579) [The World Upside Down] depicts a text that reads “Hypocrisy and Tyranny hold the world upside down/ Fidelity and Love sleep, so Time teaches us” [Appendix 25]. This is part of a series of four engravings whose “general meaning is clear: the country is being exploited; it is in crisis, plagued by violence, and can only regain peace and mutual love by observing God’s commandments. The set has an unmistakable – if moderate – anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic connotation” (Vroom, 2010, p. 104). In this way, Vroom explains how Jakob Grimmer, a Lutheran devotee, criticized the political engagement of Catholics, Calvinists and Lutherans during this turbulent period by depicting an apple of discord in the hand of the figure of ‘hypocrisy’ as an anti-Catholic symbol, changing the rosary to signify envy. Alain-René Lesage’s *Le Monde Renversé* (1718) is a comic drama in one act that critically describes the arrival of Pierrot and Harlequin to an unknown world called the Kingdom of Merlin, where all their wishes came true unhindered, and where order and happiness governed, is a significant example from France.

Southern Europe also provides well-known examples of this motif, mainly in the poetic tradition known as ‘El mundo al revés’ in Spain and ‘Il mondo alla rovescia’ in Italy (Wilson, 1973, p. 103). Although some of these popular expressions did not originate in Spain (Darrell, 2013), seventeenth-century authors of the Spanish Golden Age such as Tirso de Molina or Lope de Vega are famous for the use of the WTUD topos. One such work was Baltasar Gracian’s *El Criticón*, where it is possible to find many references to the topos: “all the things of the world must be seen upside-down in order to see them right” (Gracián, 1757, p. 73).. Although the emergence of this device in Europe has its roots in the poetics of *adynata* or the *impossibilia* of Virgil (Vaillo, 1982, p. 365; Wilson, 1973, p. 103), the ‘El mundo al revés’ topos was a literary and visual inversion used to address contingent issues as an alternative discourse to the official [Spanish] one. Francisco de Quevedo (1580–1645), an exile who used his poetry for political purposes, exemplifies this topos. For example, Quevedo’s poetry shows the ideological, thematic and structural development of the WTUD motif by the inversion of words, verses and concepts, commonly using the inversion known as *quiasmo*, which alters the order of the subjects in the verses expressed in antithetical pairs such as day/night or man/woman (Vaillo, 1982). Carlos Vaillo (1982, p. 367) claims that it is in Quevedo’s *La Hora de todos y la Fortuna con Seso* that the topos is fully developed because it hinges on the basic notion that the world is wrong. Thus, the WTUD topos became extensively popular and influential in a key moment of Western history: European colonization of the Americas.

Accordingly, to succeed with its colonization project, Spain needed more than mere military might, and the Iberian Peninsula effectively used its literary, musical and visual 'armaments' to ensure and reinforce its ideological and cultural power with different outcomes. These poetical, musical and visual practices – carried out by Jesuits for evangelization, among others, and then established by Latin American inhabitants – show outstanding likenesses to the Spanish medieval minstrel and other European types of troubadours (Nettl and Béhague, 1990, p. 189; Grebe, 1967; Aubrey, 1996). Martha Bermudez (1987) researched the earliest evidence of literary opposition to the Viceroyalty of Peru as an alternative narrative to the Spanish administration that had to manage a polarized society: that of the ruling Spanish-born people, and the indigenous and African people ruled. This manifested itself in, for example, the dichotomy of antithesis and conflict between city and countryside which was at the very core of the colonial society. Thus, the minority population of European conquerors implemented the control and exploitation of large multi-ethnic groups as workers. However, the first texts of protestation came from Spanish-born people such as priests and officers, and were principally aimed at the Viceroy of Peru. Julie Greer Johnson's *Satire in The New Colonial Spanish America* (1993) is a critical study of the most important and representative literary traditions of the creoles, who denounced their political marginalization and the misrepresentation of the New World besides fostering awareness of an 'other' towards the European continent since Columbus' discovery. Johnson notes that

The use of subversive discourse, some members of these marginalized sectors of society hoped, would enable them to arrive at a more authentic and comprehensive view of the New World, and with this goal in mind, they endeavoured to shorten the distance between the word and the object it represented by separating illusion from reality and myth from history. In order to expose the mythological foundations upon which Spanish American culture had supposedly been validated, therefore, they responded by inverting or reversing a number of traditional literary strategies, which would, in turn, cast doubt upon the prevailing authority and the ideology it espoused. (Johnson, 1993, p. 5)

Thereby, the first example comes from Peninsula-born poet Mateo Rosas de Oquendo's *Sátira* (1598) which inverts misrepresentation of Lima society at the end of the sixteenth century criticising the corruption and human behaviour in the capital of the Spanish Viceroyalty. By transcribing "social contradiction into a conflict of words through the antagonistic pairing of terms and places in contention the very meaning and function of language" (Ibid., p. 34). For example, "how many parents without children/how many silent speakers/how many talking mutes/how many valiant cowards/how many cowardly brave men". Even more, Oquendo's satire targeted *Arauco Domado*; an epic poem published in 1596 by Pedro de Oña, the first Chilean-born poet, who was hired by the

Hurtado Mendoza family to write an elegy on the role played by the figure of Don García Hurtado de Mendoza - who governed Peru from 1589 to 1596 - in the domination and pacification of the Mapuche people in Chile, as a way to stress the importance of his figure as a symbol of perfection, pride and honour of Spanish political ideology (Ibid., pp. 40-45). Consisting of an introduction and nineteen songs, and structured by hendecasyllable octaves (eleven-syllables verses in which rhyming verses comprise first, fourth and fifth; third and sixth; and seventh and eighth), Oña's *Arauco Domado* paid homage to the viceroy's idealized indigenous characterizations by following Latin rhetoric, descriptions of landscapes and markedly Renaissance allusions to classical mythology. In *The Little Peruvian Naval Victory* (1593?), de Oquendo humorously inverts Oña's epic account by replacing the fashionable poetic structure with a mocking verse as a way to expose the superficial glorified victory attributed to Don García over the English privateer Richard Hawkins' attempt to take over the viceregal coasts (Johnson, 1993, p. 41; Lasarte, 2006, p. 42). More interestingly, Rosas de Oquendo, who also worked for Don García Hurtado de Mendoza, uses Oña's own stylistic poetics to develop his parody and in doing so he creates new linguistic elements with metaphorical purposes, for example, in the lines: 'terráfico terror terrificante / del aurífero mundo antártico' [terrible terrifying terror / of the auriferous Antarctic-like world]. He also incorporates the native language, Quechua, when writing, "He was in 'Lima Pacha'", "pacha" in Quechua meaning land, therefore the land of Lima (Bermudez, 1987, p. 149; Johnson, 1993, p. 42). Thus, through the medium of parody, Oquendo satirically unveils the fallacy and misrepresentation at the heart of Lima's society as established by the Spanish conquerors that sought to reinforce their imperial power by prohibiting the Quechua language for all viceregal and social purposes (Bermudez, 1987, p. 130). Oquendo's final goal, says Johnson (1993, p. 47), "is to prod his readers into a realization of their own environment and especially what individuals write about it, which can never be taken at face value", because the established conventions are corrupt and misleading.

The first examples to contain features of the WTUD topos in Chile would mainly be found in its literature. According to Spanish-Chilean literary scholar Juan Uribe-Echevarria (1974a, pp. 14-24), in the years following Chile's attainment of independence (1810), there was significant use of political satire in *décima* style on prints such as the 'hojas de versos populares imprentados' [printed sheets of popular verses] during the middle of the nineteenth-century, and a flourishing discourse on nationalism and patriotism, mainly targeting the Spanish aristocracy in Chile. This type of critical poetry was derived from the Spanish *décima*, a verse form that had spread since colonialism in Chile within the *Canto a lo Poeta* repertoire. Popular Chilean poets and singers

developed this poetical form by using the octosyllabic glossed quatrain, as we mentioned before, for singing pagan and worldly themes to the former, while the later are biblical subjects. (Goic, 2006, p. 222; Pereira-Salas, 1962; Uribe-Echevarría, 1974a). This form had been known as ‘verso’ [verse] in Spanish minstrel poetry, comprising a quatrain, four décimas and a fifth stanza of farewell, distinguishing the sung-poetry from the recited poetry called ‘prosa’ [prose]. It is in the Canto a lo Humano where the WTUD devices evolved in Chile, especially one in the form known as ‘Versos por el mundo al revés’, in which poets exaggerate and mock about everything and even make black mood for depict a strange world that is inverted:

Excerpt from ‘Versos Por el Mundo al Revés’ [The World Turned Upside-Down Verses]

Qué pintor tan primoroso	What a fine painter
Que pinto el mundo al revés	That painted the world upside down
La niña enamora al mozo	The girl seduces the boy
Y el ladrón detrás del juez;	And the thief behind the judge;
Para arriba van los pies	Upwards go the feet
Con la cabeza pisando	With the head stepping
El fuego al agua apagando	The fire extinguishing the water
Un mudo enseñando letras	A mute man teaching letters
Los bueyes en la carreta	The oxen in the cart
Y el carretero tirando	And the carter pulling

(Uribe-Echevarría, 1962, p. 121).

Uribe-Echevarría collected this décima from the popular poet Manuel Gallardo (1939) in the course of his research in the province of Aculeo, a village lying one hour's drive away from Santiago de Chile with a peasant community who had inherited these sung-verses, in the same way as Parra did. This is borne out by, for example, Rainer Canales (2005), who researched Parra's *Décimas* and *Cantos Folklóricos Chilenos* within the same framework of Bakhtin's notions of carnival and utopia, and concluded that they share the genres, images and procedures of this topos. Furthermore, Oporto (2013, p. 111) also claims that the Canto a lo Poeta influenced Parra's thinking regarding the relation of the topos of the WTUD and the power of governance as guided by Christ's virtues of justice, goodness, wisdom, and so forth, concluding that ‘El Gavilán’ also would reflect some features of this topos which depicts a love in crisis that destroys and loses its natural sense. In this sense, the WTUD topos could help to explain some of Parra's artworks, partly because she was a distinguished player of the Canto a lo Poeta repertoire as revealed in her first two recordings of the series *El Folklore de Chile* (Parra, 1957a; Parra, 1958), but also because of the presence of the figures and devices described above in her own artworks. Another interesting example come from a satiric text Parra musicalized in July 1958, by Gonzalo Rojas, Parra's friend (Parra, 2006, p. 140; Parra, 2011, p. 85). This was the poem, ‘Satire to the Rhyme’, included in his

collection *Contra la muerte* (1992) with illustrations by visual artist Julio Escámez. In this satire, Rojas depicts an inverted image of the cultivated, polite Chilean bourgeois by narrating what he really sees in a 'meeting' with the bourgeoisie, in contrast to the official image: "I've eaten with the bourgeois, I've danced with the bourgeois, with the most ferocious bourgeois, in a bourgeois house. Comfortably seated behind the table, I saw them as they are: what their world is, what are their ideals: money and food!" (Rojas, 1992, pp. 78-79).

Overall, Parra's own repertoire and research provide two types of the WTUD motif from the Canto a lo Poeta repertoire; one whose literary text describes an inverted world and another whose literary structure is inverted. The first type is literary as three songs describe this *topos*: 'Hay una ciudad muy lejos/Versos por ponderación' [There is a City Very Far Away] [track 69]; the text says "There is a city far away, there the poor go, the walls are made of bread, and the pillars of cheese [...] the tiles of *sopaipillas*⁸⁴ and the bricks of caramel cookie" (Parra, 2013, p.26). The second one is titled 'Por el mundo al revés' [The world turned upside down], the text says "I saw a man walking on his head, and a bull biting a dog, on a mountain a hill, and a friar who never prays. I also saw a princess, naked and walking barefoot. I saw a saint drunk, the stars on the ground and in the heights of heaven the world turned upside down" (V. Parra, 1965, p. 52). The third one is 'De las piernas de un zancudo' [from the legs of a mosquito] [track 70], whose first quatrain also shows evidence of an inverted world: "from the legs of a mosquito / comes out a giant running / and even if they want to deny / a blind man was watching him".

The second type of the WTUD is produced through the inversion of the structure, as shown in the sacred song 'De Génesis *Prencipiaron*' [They Began with Genesis] [track 71], whose subtitle is "By the sacred writing, Quatrain 'contraverso'", which she copied from the peasant singer Agustín Rebolledo (Parra, 2013, pp. 38-43). Besides having the regular structure of four *décimas*, with its quatrain that works as the literary guide and a farewell *décima* stanza, the song has an extra five stanzas in *décima* known as *contraverso*, a very common variation among such virtuoso singer-poets for displaying their improvisational skills (Uribe-Echevarría, 1962, p. 30; Parra, 1957a). In the French version, and the very first edited book of Parra, titled *Poésie populaire des Andes*, she writes that 'contraverso' means 'interverti' in French, which in English means 'inverted' (Parra, 1965, p. 15). The first four *décimas* titled as 'verse' are based on the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, while the 'contraverse' (subtitled as 'bleeding') are based

⁸⁴ Glossary

on the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Its structure and internal organization are worth explaining here because it certainly illustrates Parra's compositional knowledge in literary and musical terms. Parra recorded this poem-song for the album *El Folklore de Chile volume I* (Parra, 2014h, track 17), playing the guitar and singing the *décima*-verses, whereas the counterverse-*décima* verses [contraverso] is recited without playing the guitar.

Excerpt from 'De Génesis *Prencipiaron*'

DE GÉNESIS PRENCIPIARON⁸⁵
el Antiguo Testamento;
profetas de tal talento
este prencipio tomaron.
Deleuteromio hallaron,
al que Josué da razón
en Los Jueces hubo unión,
según dicen los romanos.
Hecho por setenta ancianos,
TREINTA Y NUEVE LIBROS SON.

TREINTA Y NUEVE LIBROS SON
los del más antiguo acento,
que del concilio al detento
San Mateo da razón.
Del penitente el perdón
con San Paulo predicaron
y las Pistolas fundaron
los corintos eminentes,
y estos santos elocuentes
DE GÉNESIS PRENCIPIARON.
(Parra, 2013, p. 38)

THEY BEGAN WITH GENESIS
the Old Testament;
prophets of such talent
they took this principle.
They found Deuteronomy
to which Joshua gives reason;
in the Judges there was union,
according to the Romans.
Made by seventy elders,
THIRTY-NINE BOOKS ARE.

THIRTY-NINE BOOKS ARE.
those of the oldest accent,
that from the council to the unlawful holder
San Mateo gives the reason.
forgiveness from the penitent
with San Paulo they preached
and the Pistols founded
the eminent Corinthians,
and these eloquent saints
THEY BEGAN WITH GENESIS

In *Cantos Folklóricos Chilenos* (Parra, 2013, p. 41), the text of 'De Génesis *Prencipiaron*' appears with a first quatrain containing the verses which will finish the first four *décimas*, while in the 'counterverse' the four *décimas* are begun in a mirrored or reversed disposition: verse and its counter-verse. In other words, what the form requires is to invert the first and last lines of each tenth, improvising new content in between. Parra's recorded version could be better to show here than the version in her book, because it illustrates more clearly the inner organization given by the visual effect of each doubled tenth, which seems to be similar to the concept explained by Nicanor over the meaning of antipoetry from the physics angle – 'plus' and 'minus', positive and negative charge, proton and electron, a thing and its opposite. The musical features are quite simple, in a

⁸⁵ Capital letters from the original source.

similar vein to other sacred songs, following a modal harmony based on B major, E Major, A major, and F# Major.

In this way, the Canto a lo Poeta repertoire provided Violeta Parra with a knowledge rich in literary structure organization, yet it was not an isolated case. In the same album *Violeta Parra. El Folklore de Chile Vol. I* (Parra, 2014h, track 12) the song titled 'Parabienes al Revés' [Inverted congratulations] [track 72] was included, described thus by Soublette (Parra, 1957a) in the record booklet: "On her recent trip to Paris, Violeta Parra composed this song in the style of 'parabién', whose main feature lies in the composition of the lyrics. The same verses of the first quatrain are used in the second quatrain but in reverse, thus achieving a curious effect, without the repetition ever losing the meaning of the original verse".

Excerpt from 'Parabienes al Revés'

[1] Una carreta enflorá'	A flower-decorated cart
[2] se detiene en la capilla	stops in the chapel
[3] el cura salió a l'entrá'	the priest came out at the entrance
[4] diciendo "qué maravilla"	saying "what a wonder"
[4] diciendo "qué maravilla"	saying "what a wonder"
[3] el cura salió a l'entrá'	the priest came out at the entrance
[2] se detiene en la capilla	stops in the chapel
[1] Una carreta enflorá'	a flower-decorated cart
[1] A las once del reloj	At eleven o'clock
[2] entran los novios del brazo	the couple enters holding hands
[3] se les llenaron de arroz	they were filled with rice
[4] el sombrero y los zapatos	the hat and the shoes
[4] el sombrero y los zapatos	the hat and the shoes
[3] se les llenaron de arroz	they were filled with rice
[2] entran los novios del brazo	the couple enters holding hands
[1] A las once del reloj	at eleven o'clock
(Parra, 1993, p. 79)	

Concerning Parra's own compositions, there are many texts in which she temporarily uses parody, satire or other reversing devices in songs such as '21 son los dolores' and 'El Albertío', but lack of scholarly research presents us with a significant lacunae. This is especially relevant in considering the implications, for example those concerning the critical use of WTUD topos and other strategies of inversion. Given that there is clear evidence of Parra's knowledge and use of this motif in both her own artworks and research, this is a curious omission. For example, there is a decima song that features five octosyllabic stanzas of ten lines that turn the world upside down. This is 'El diablo en el paraíso' [Devil in the paradise] [track 73], recorded in 1965, which also develops the WTUD motif, structured in a similar way to the Canto a lo Poeta, but with some differences as Parra herself categorized, without quatrain but with farewell.

Interestingly, Nicanor (Morales, 2003, p. 91) said that when he last saw his sister on Saturday 4th February, one day before her death, he asked her to sing him a song, and Violeta played 'Un domingo en el cielo' [Sunday in heaven] [track 74], a verse-song composed by Violeta Parra which depicts the heaven in a festive satiric way. But more notably, Parra painted an untitled oil on canvas [Figure 54] that seems to depict the imagery of 'El diablo en el paraíso' (Parra, 2008, p. 49). Here, she presents an unusual scene in which there are two main characters: what seems to be the traditional figure of Jesus Christ in the forefront, and the Devil amidst the backdrop within a colourful tonality. Could this be the painted version of 'El diablo en el paraíso'? Maybe. Also, Carmen Oviedo's *Mentira todo lo cierto* (1990) [a lie is all that is right], a biographical construction of Parra's life, makes direct reference to Parra's WTUD motif, which is drawn from a line in the aforementioned song. The above, as well as the existing literature, suggests that Parra knew and used this poetic device, so arguably could well have been able to develop and transfer this motif throughout her oeuvre as fully conscious, albeit implicit, social criticism.



Figure 54, Violeta Parra, without title, 70 x 95,5 cm, oil on canvas. Nicanor Parra collection.

Music as a Mirror of Society: Turning the World Upside-Down.

In his book *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Jacques Attali (1985, p. 4), posits that "music is more than an object of study: it is a way of perceiving the world" because "it reflects the manufacture of society; it constitutes the audible waveband of the vibrations and signs that make up society. An instrument of understanding, it prompts us to decipher a sound form of knowledge". As such, music holds from ancient times a capacity for change that the political and religious powers have employed for purposes of social control, but at the same time, it has prefigured subversive acts. Similarly, beyond Parra's political textuality in songs and paintings might there be other forms of protest and criticism encoded, or expressed without words? If so, how and why? Or in other words, can we consider translating poetics as an artistic device for Parra's interdisciplinary oeuvre? Could she have translated a political poetics from a text into musical sounds? In this final section, I will attempt to illustrate how Parra poetically translated a political ideology into the song 'El Pueblo' through a musical organization.

The preceding sections inform us about how scholars and artistic institutions have judged Parra's art, but also suggest to us the 'how' and the 'why' of Parra's political art itself. In that sense, and taking into account the foregoing, I want to suggest another way in which Parra could protest: through the interconnection between musical and literary poetic devices codified as WTUD. As we have seen, 'Tres Palabras', a solo guitar work created by Parra, was first recorded for the LP *Composiciones para guitarra* (Parra, 1957b, track 5), and later used by herself as guitar accompaniment for the song 'El pueblo' [the people] in *Toda Violeta Parra* (Parra, 1961, track 12), with words by Neruda. First, lack of verifiable information does not allow us to accurately state which one was 'created' first, but by following the recording data we can ascertain a probable order (Cancioneros, 2015). More evidence can be found in Parra's film music (Burton, 1990, p. 111; Corro, 2010, pp. 94-95; Martin, 1997, p. 398). As we have seen in Chapter IV, Parra recorded solo guitar music for Bravo's *Mimbre* [track 52], that shows the work of a wicker-maker who creates figures with his hands while she plays the guitar with dissonant textures, chords and melodies, and including parts of 'Tres Palabras'. What we now know as the first section of 'Tres palabras' is briefly played twice at a faster tempo, between the timecodes 04:26/04:42 and 05:03/05:08. Moreover, in 1962, Bravo filmed *Las banderas del pueblo* [The flags of the people], a historical documentary in which he interviewed saltpetre miners in northern Chile during Salvador Allende's first presidential bid. The film includes a scene where Pablo Neruda declaims a poem as a slogan in front of a crowd (Burton, 1990, p. 112; Corro, 2010, p. 96). Does the imagery depicted by Bravo [Appendix 26] have any relation to Parra's 'El pueblo'?

'Las Flores de Punitaqui': XIV: El Pueblo

Paseaba el pueblo sus banderas rojas
 y entre ellos en la piedra que tocaron
 estuve en la jornada fragorosa
 y en las altas canciones de la lucha.
 Vi cómo paso a paso conquistaban.
 Solo su resistencia era camino,
 y aislados eran como trozos rotos
 de una estrella, sin bocas y sin brillo.
 Juntos en la unidad hecha en silencio,
 eran el fuego, el canto indestructible,
 el lento paso del hombre en la tierra
 hecho profundidades y batallas.
 Eran la dignidad que combatía
 lo que fue pisoteado, y despertaba
 como un sistema, el orden de las vidas
 que tocaban la puerta y se sentaban
 en la sala central con sus banderas.
 (Neruda, 1993, p. 300)

The people paraded their red flags
 and I was among them on the stone
 they struck, in the thunderous march
 And in the struggle's lofty songs.
 I saw how they conquered step by step.
 Their resistance alone was road
 and isolated they were like broken bits
 Of a star, mouthless and lusterless.
 Joined in the unity made silence,
 they were fire, indestructible song,
 the slow passage of mankind on earth
 Turned into depths and battles.
 they were dignity that fought
 whatever was trampled, they awakened
 like a system, the order of lives
 that touched the door and sat down
 in the main hall with their flags.

This song certainly raises many questions, such as why Parra used Neruda's text, or why she chose a solo guitar piece to musicalize Neruda's words. What does it mean? Let us start with the text itself. It has seventeen verses of eleven syllables each. The text comes from Neruda's *Canto General*, specifically from 'Canto XIV', chapter XI entitled 'The Flowers of Punitaqui'; a reflexion on his personal experience in northern Chile where he learned of the difficult working conditions of miners. It is a chronicle of the Americas, or Neruda's history of the New World, in which the author also pays homage to the Soviet Union and the Communist Party but ignores the atrocities committed by Stalin (Neruda, 1993, p. 7). Neruda's 'El pueblo' narrates an epic and collective image of the people, drawn with expressionist rhetoric (Loyola, 2014, p. 20). It is clear from the first line that it conveys a Communist-inspired image of a people that manifest their will to fight: 'The people paraded their red flags'. This poetic imagery resembles many Muralist works by Alfaro Siqueiros and Diego Rivera; specifically, there is a striking similarity to Rivera's *Desfile del 1 de mayo en Moscú* [Appendix 27]. In the context of the growing popularity of Chilean Socialism that led to Salvador Allende's government in 1970, the notion of 'el pueblo' [the people] was a fundamental concept that sought to replace the individual power of the bourgeoisie with the collective power of the people (Pinedo, 2000, p. 138; Torres, 2004, p. 56). According to Javier Pinedo (2000, p. 139), Neruda and Parra played a key role in the success of this ideological paradigm, synthesizing it by using Parra's words: "I convinced myself once again that one man is worthless. And that when men come together, led by a generous impulse, driven by a desire for peace and friendship, by a desire to make anything, but to do something, only then they have the right of calling themselves men" (Parra, 2011, p. 59). This explanation contextualizes Parra's 'El pueblo'. Another point to consider here is that

the guitar is usually associated with folk and popular culture. As we have seen in Chapter IV, art music history in Chile and European culture shows a limited relationship with the instrument. One possible explanation is that the modern guitar was created only in the mid-nineteenth century (Noonan, 2008, p. 117), hence its relatively recent emergence probably means that it has less linkage to art music and its composers. Meanwhile, the modern guitar has been strongly associated with the folklore and popular music of Chile (Uribe, 2004; Sauvalle, 1994; Uribe, 2002). So, Parra employed an instrument that had not been historically linked to ideological power to compose her own instrumental music. From this context, can this song be read as a form of protest against hegemonic art? It is probably an ideological challenge to the realm of arts and its paradigms again. It is not uncommon that 'Tres palabras' may be seen as a challenge or manifesto to undermine official Chilean (art) music, to quote Dillon. Could it be thought that Parra considered art music a tool of domination, thus not a suitable means of protest? In order to demonstrate this, some basic features should be explained. 'Tres Palabras' [track 33] is a rhapsodic and quaternary form (A B C A) composition for solo guitar that uses traditional tonality (Concha, 1995, p. 83). These three sections are rhythmically and modally contrasted in their structural construction. The first section, of sixteen bars, uses the compound meter of 6/8 as a harmonic rhythm, and has a modal pentachord (A B C D E). The second section, of twelve bars, switches to a simple meter of 2/2 with a minor modal hexachord (E G A B \flat C D). The third section, of twelve bars, returns to the first harmonic rhythm with a minor modal pentachord (G A B C D F).

This brings us to another key question: what musical features does this piece have for singing Neruda's text? I would like to draw attention to the three contrasting sections that offer interesting ideological interconnections as a possible answer. There is a striking feature in this piece that makes it different to the rest of Parra's guitar compositions (Concha et al., 1994); this is the only piece whose main melodic material is developed by the lower line [Example 7]; specifically the first and third sections, rejecting the – most common - traditional position of melody within the upper registers of musical pitch which is the dominant characteristic of most Western folk music [Example 2]. The second section of 'Tres palabras', on the other hand, changes the harmony, rhythm and melody presented in the first and third sections. Accordingly, Parra inverted the conventional procedure in which the lower line works as the accompaniment to the melody in the lowest regions of musical pitch (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2007, p. 53). Thus, in 'Tres palabras' the accompaniment is in the upper part of the musical pitch, whereas the lower line - the accompaniment - plays the main character by leading the melody in the lowest pitch in the two-line notation transcription.



Example 7, transcription of Parra's 'Tres Palabras', measures 1-4.



Example 8, transcription of Parra's 'El Pueblo', measures 1-2.

Parra's 'El Pueblo' [track 75] presents some changes from 'Tres palabras' and the film music. For example, its binary compound metre of 6/8 turns now to a quintuple metre, to singing every hendecasyllable verse, and syncing sound and words. If we transcribe this to a score [Example 8] we can interpret the new metre as 5/4, but there is also a change in the melodic rhythm from the triplets in 'Tres palabras' to a music-poetic dactyl figure. This poetic meter is characterised by one short syllable followed by two short syllables (Apel, 1969, p. 682), the music-poetic pattern Parra uses to sing the lyrics, in other words the line-melody played by the lower line. Parra's 'El Pueblo' [Example 8] uses the first and the third sections from 'Tres palabras', thus excluding the second section, which features 'the main character' – the melody – in the upper region of the musical pitch, while the lower line follows it as accompaniment. Soubllette (Parra, 1961) claimed that this song: "has two well-defined sections; in the second one it is possible to hear a subtle Araucanian [Mapuche] influence whose rhythm recalls the beat of the kultrun [drum]". Again, can this be interpreted ideologically? This traditional position of the melody, in the highest pitch, and therefore in the higher position of the musical score, might be interpreted as the traditional position of the elite, art music, the oligarchy, political power, etc. In other words, Parra ideologically challenges the hegemonic order by symbolizing the uprising of the oppressed: "They were dignity that fought / whatever was trampled, and they awakened / like a system, the order of lives". I would argue that this is translated to the musical tones, and illustrated through a score, to symbolize an inverted position of 'El pueblo' in a hierarchical society. I posit that the musical position of 'El pueblo's melody conveys the distinctions between music's high and low, elite and popular, classical and folk and so forth, reflecting social class difference, and also

political ideology (Fine, 2006; Leppert, 1993; Leppert, 1989; Morales, 2003; Uribe, 2002). Thus, Parra literally inverts the common position of the melody and the accompaniment “from top to bottom”, to quote Mikhail Bakhtin (1984, 11). Similarly, from an interdisciplinary perspective, we can understand Parra’s musical inversion from literature through Bakhtin’s notion of polyphony, which uses musical terminology as an analogy to describe, or translate, “a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphonic world” that destroyed “established forms of the fundamentally monologic (homophonic) European novel” (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 7). Bakhtin points out that

Grossman’s observations on the musical nature of Dostoevsky’s compositions are very true and subtle. Transposing [Mikhail] Glinka’s statement that “everything in life is counterpoint” from the language of musical theory to the language of poetics, one could say that for Dostoevsky everything in life was dialogue, that is, dialogic opposition. And indeed, from the point of view of philosophical aesthetics, contrapuntal relationships in music are only a musical variety of the more broadly understood concept of dialogic relationships. (Ibid., p. 42)

Using Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s novel as model, and based on the analysis of the literary critic Leonid Grossman, Bakhtin (Ibid.) identifies the plurality of voices that express different ideas in a discourse as a fundamental characteristic in a novel, and its relationship to the plurality of voices found in a fugue with its deployment of polyphony and counterpoint: “Dostoevsky, with great subtlety, transfers onto the plane of literary composition the law of musical modulation from one tonality to another. The tale is built on the principle of artistic counterpoint. [...] This is indeed point versus point (punctum contra punctum). These are different voices singing variously on a single theme”.

If we can transpose concepts and ideas from music onto poetry, we can, therefore, translate – invert- poetical/literary concepts into music. In this way, Parra’s inversion is translated to the musical tones from poetry, and visible on a score, to symbolize an inverted position of ‘el pueblo’s voice in Chilean society – understood as a “dialogic opposition”. Through Bakhtin’s notion of a polyphonic novel as an interdisciplinary reference, it may be noted that the musical position of the melody that sings the text of ‘El pueblo’ embodies and translates the distinctions between music’s high and low, reflecting social class difference and political ideology. This musical interpretation seems to coincide too with the fourth line of the text: “and in the struggle’s lofty songs / I saw how they conquered step by step”. By using the sheet music to identify both voices, we can say that those oppressed by power, the working classes, are leading the melody of the music through the quavers – with stems facing down – so that words, and their social implications, are sonically represented in the positions of the musical

notes. Meanwhile, the politically powerful, represented by the crotchets – with stems facing up – follow the melody, playing one note: E [Example 8] As in her paintings, which feature the oppressed on the left side and the oppressors on the right side, for Parra the lower voice embodies - by singing - “the people” (the oppressed), and the upper voice, in turn, the hegemonic power (the oppressor).

In her song ‘Yo canto la diferencia’, Parra deliberately says that she does not play the guitar for applause but rather to display a hidden truth. In the same way, she does this textually in ‘El Pueblo’. It is not accidental that science scholar Alan Sokal uses the first stanza of ‘Yo canto la diferencia’ for the epigraph of his book *Beyond the Hoax*, in which he criticizes extreme postmodernism and misinformation in science research papers in the United States, highlighting “the importance of making a clear distinction between truth and falsehood” (Sokal, 2008, p. 457). He (Ibid., p. 107) notes: “I identify politically with the left, understood broadly as the political current that denounces the injustices and inequalities of capitalist society and that seeks more egalitarian and democratic social and economic arrangements”. Thus, this chapter defies assumptions - from the official culture - such as one supposing Parra’s artworks to have been spontaneously created in some mystical sense and without any foundation or preparation, and at the same time, it confirms Oporto’s claim regarding the misconception of Parra’s art as lacking “political ideology, reasoning, intellectual reflection and argumentation” because it has been widely linked to the notion of naiveté. Furthermore, I have demonstrated why art music analysis works effectively as a complementary tool for studying Parra’s music, as proposed by Tagg. Although Parra did not state this procedure, I have shown that she did use literature inversion devices, whose method she could translate into music to “make the guitar speak”. Therefore, she can convey an ideological position by using parallel poetics; that is, Parra alludes to the ideology of Neruda’s ‘El Pueblo’ by translating textual criticism into the organization of the musical notes. Finally, Parra illustrates Jaques Attali’s claim that music may decipher the structure of a society by inverting the official structure of music through sounds and words to articulate a political and ideological position.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how Parra deliberately gave to her voice the ideological power of critique, by distinguishing herself from what she saw as the officially accepted, trained singing style. In this line, the WTUD topos demonstrates how Parra connected herself to the long history of people who critically and artistically inverted the

official dominant or fashionable trends. Parra's 'El Pueblo' also adapted her own ideological voice from Bakhtin's dialogism and polyphony in that she raised the unofficial voice of the people in opposition to the "fundamentally monologic (homophonic)" Chilean [high-]art music [voice]. Therefore, Parra's political ideology in this song was not limited to the text. Parra's reference to Chilean high-art music and visuals might be linked to 'counteract' their academic approach such as that of the painter and composer Carlos Isamitt whose interdisciplinary oeuvre precedes Parra's.

Overall, the impression created is of an ideological and artistic reflection on the ways in which this 'activist art' defies and criticizes social, political, economic and conceptual distinctions in an extremely polarized society. I have started with an overall view regarding how music scholarship has approached popular music in order to address the multiple factors involved in this type of music which has traditionally been seen in opposition to art music as the musical notation (or lack thereof) and the notion of 'folk' exemplify. I have also discussed how this debate has problematized attempts by the - mainly Chilean - academy to classify Parra's music for solo guitar. On the other hand, several British scholars have explored the ways in which cultural issues artistically shape popular music. For example, Robert Pring-Mill has taken an academic approach to Latin American poetry and music, studying both Pablo Neruda's poetry and Violeta Parra's songs, making clear the political implications of their work. Most notably, the increase in academic interest in folk song during the twentieth century led to US folklorist Alan Lomax recording Parra in London in May 1956.

We have also seen how domestic and foreign social issues touched Parra's life, driving her to actively express a political position at a time when the world was ideologically divided between the Socialist East and the Capitalist West. Parra's oeuvre had a clear left-wing standing, as did Neruda, the most famous Chilean artist. However, Parra had neither the academic training nor the acclaim that Neruda had, so her ideologically charged work always struggled for institutional recognition and support, though her reception outside Chile was more favourable. Still, it is important to stress that at a given moment Parra gave up her political support of both the communist and socialist parties. Like Nicanor, Violeta did not follow Neruda and other artists, who did stay politically engaged for years afterwards. It seems that Parra's political ideology was beyond those parties - or even in conflict with them - and was probably closer to the *Canto a lo Poeta* philosophy which freely sings its opinion - quoting *Martin Fierro* - about what is wrong when the world seems to be upside-down: Parra (1998, p. 119) said, "there are things in this world, so lacking of explanation, that cause meditation or deep thoughts". This was problematic once Parra started to artistically experiment and place

herself beyond the boundaries of folk assigned by the official and institutionalized gatekeepers of Chilean art, namely once she started to translate her ideas into music for solo guitar, music for films, exhibit her visual works, and write her autobiography in *décimas*. For example, we have seen how Parra's music for solo guitar has challenged Chilean scholars to this day, whose attempts to categorise these musics are frustrated because they belong to a specific and unique context, which has led to a neglect of specifically musicological analysis. We have seen how Parra's promotion of authentic folksong had to do with the difference between the stylized folk songs frequently heard on the radio and the traditional practices carried out in the rural areas of Chile such as the *Canto a lo Poeta* repertoire. This led Parra to a more ideological stance over the implications of folklore within Chilean society.

Parra's interdisciplinarity was exemplified through poetry, music and visual art by the popular Christianity understood as 'the religiosity of the oppressed', where she criticises religious and government representatives in the same way as the *Canto a lo Poeta* repertoire criticized modernity. As we have seen, Parra (Vicuña, 1958, p. 72) encapsulated this in a Chilean musicological magazine when describing a popular poet who "sings the vanity of the wisdom of the 'earthly planet' and mocks the wise men who 'in order to give proof [of their skills] take ink, paper and [musical] instrument". This raises many questions, such as: is this a criticism of art music which is based on a written score? Why did Parra write *Cantos Folkloricos Chilenos*, but not write her instrumental music? This was taken further by Parra when she questioned the suitability of an academically trained voice to authentically sing the pain expressed by her ballet 'El Gavilán'. I have also reviewed the main features of the popular topos 'The world turned upside down' and its critical purposes, establishing the ways in which it has been used in Latin America since colonization to debunk the Spanish viceroalties. In Chile, it is possible to see its development since independence through the *Lira Popular*, which was an ekphrastic combination of writing and visuals, and through the orality of the *Canto a lo Poeta* repertoire. Having established the main social, historical, political and artistic determinants, I posit an interdisciplinary exercise in order to illustrate how Parra might poetically translate Neruda's ideological criticism into the song 'El Pueblo' by using the WTUD topos. I have also demonstrated that Phillip Tagg is right to observe that we cannot dismiss the existing methodological tools of art music to analyse all the elements involved in popular music just because the latter are not inscribed in that tradition. In fact, when transcribing Parra's music to a written score we can see the extent of her development, and in the case of 'El Pueblo', a possible reason why its elements are structured and organized in such a way.

Conclusion

A big hug for each one of you from the frustrated bride,
who cries singing, who embroiders her sorrows
and paints her stumbles.
I have bad luck.
Sincerely yours.

Violeta Parra
El Libro Mayor de Violeta Parra

I have put forward the thesis that Violeta Parra was able to translate poetics from one medium to another in varied forms. From the act of collecting and representing old songs for her books and albums, teaching and disseminating the traditional knowledge, to creatively conveying the same themes through different arts, Parra was always *translating poetics*. In other words, the representation of abstract and general structures and procedures was being translated through a poetical language into different art forms. This poetical translation of rural and unofficial cultures, therefore, marks its distinctive originality as well as suggesting its linkage to Western artists who translated poetics from one art to another. This linkage is evidenced through the World Turned Upside-Down topos, whose critical nature places Parra as a prominent exponent from Latin America because, in doing so, she dialogically gave light to the voice of the unofficial people to counteract the monological high-art voice. Similarly, Parra's songs are more than simple text; rather, they seem to be strategically employed to articulate her own critique. Furthermore, Parra's poetics of translation was developed in the new media of the time such as radio and television, which can also be seen as a manifestation of her innovative and pioneering approaches.

Parra's will to express, represent and convey her world led her to look for traditional artistic tools that have their own features, values and history. For example, we can safely assume that Parra saw painting, music, and poetry as complementary to each other because she considered them as different poetical languages into which she could translate her worldview, culture and experiences, life, etc. Parra used language to translate what her culture and her own life meant and painted that world to translate it into a more direct language, and probably because, as the old maxim has it, a picture is worth a thousand words. In translating poetics, Parra was able to encode and re-elaborate themes incorporating particular elements of her own culture in the same way as her brother had, by incorporating everyday language into his poetry. Thus, Violeta Parra explored different artistic languages that, at first, seem to be ruled by their own differentiated laws, but she found that they effectively can convey any given poetics through, let us say, creative translation. This approach is evident from the beginning of her career when she creatively translated popular customs through the medium of radio, thus making a creative translation for the audience through sound which was successful.

This thesis suggests the suitability of using a more precise term, the word interdisciplinary, to describe the different interrelated connections between Parra's poetry, music and visual art, in order to advance the current scholarship and criticism which considers her as a multidisciplinary or multifaceted artist. However, there are some significant differences and distinctions regarding the way Parra translated poetics

through different media, in comparison to other artists who created in different media such as, Blake, Kandinsky or Solar. This is quite interesting because both Violeta and Nicanor seem to ignore, intentionally or otherwise, part of the “official artistic tradition”. Neither of them pursued academic study for an artistic career in an academy or university; they learned by their own means the laws of traditional poetry, music and visual art. In Violeta Parra’s case she was guided by Nicanor. Accordingly, it must be highlighted that Parra did not want to ‘learn’ from the official traditions of art music or European visual art - the official-literate language, “paper” language, to quote Bakhtin - but rather to learn from the unofficial oral tradition. This, according to Nicanor, played a key role in his antipoetry because ignoring part of that official tradition allowed him to explore “a fertile space for creativity” and to develop his own antipoetical language. Both Violeta and Nicanor seem to have experienced this process during a similar period of time, specifically before Nicanor published *Poemas y Antipoemas* in 1954. They both started mastering the Spanish tradition, then learned the Chilean oral tradition; two sources from which they would finally create their own artistic language. Yet, Parra’s quests for success and recognition in high-art circles have had a conflictive cost: the link of the word ‘popular’ to the notions of instinctive, socially decontextualized and innocent art.

We have seen that there are recurring poetical themes that Parra translated from orality to visual and musical forms. For example, Jesus Christ’s crucifixion is recurrent in Parra’s visual production, but the *Cristo en Bikini* must be read within Parra’s idea that her arpilleras represent “the good part of life”, or as she said in French: “la belle vie”, so that this version is different to the painted ones. We can safely conclude Parra uses the crucifixion symbol as an interdisciplinary theme, or what this thesis has described as poetics, which is creatively translated through poetry, music and visual interdisciplinarity. Furthermore, there are similarities in Parra’s creative translation of other symbols such as birds, specifically the dove. Most notably, Parra shows originality in her systematic poetical translation of the arpillera technique into painting by using geometrical forms and points. But it is also evident in other ways, for example when painting lines with dot-like forms resembling plants and embroidered in *Árbol de la vida* [Figure 27] and painted in Figure 13 and Figure 30. As the second chapter suggests, Parra’s poetics are clearly placed in and belong to the unofficial culture of the times that the official culture designated oral, unwritten, popular, folkloric or rural. Parra identified herself with those unofficial artists who kept alive the Canto a lo Poeta practice, an interdisciplinary art by nature, and the singers who used the ‘guitarra traspuesta’, and more importantly, who always expressed their critical thought. Interestingly, we have seen that, of the three

media in which Parra created, only music was not 'written' or fixed on paper. For example, while visual art and poetry were materially fixed by Parra's hands through colours, figures, and written words, music was not materially fixed in the same way, as art music has traditionally been through written musical notation. This might be explained by the fact that Parra had found in the recording industry a medium through which music was sonically 'fixed' on a vinyl record while poetry and visual were 'fixed' on paper, arpillera, ceramic, canvas, and so forth. Also, we can safely state that the cueca was the musical form in which Parra experimented most frequently. This has been evident since she set Nicanor's *Cueca Larga* to music, and composed music for film in an ekphrastic manner, and her five anticuecas and 'El Gavilán', which represent her musical pinnacle, in which we can clearly see Violeta's process of creative translation in similar ways to those that Nicanor saw in his antipoetry.

In the Swiss documentary, Violeta Parra was asked, "If you had to choose one of these means of expression which would you choose?", to which Parra responds as she paints, "I would choose to stay with people. It is they who drive me to do all these things". This may be a vital clue to Parra's artistic perspective in the sense that what really matters over the medium and its technique is the subject and its message; her ideological voice. But also, Parra's answer seems to reveal the significance of content over form, which also suggest the strong links between her art and her political ideology. Scholars of Parra's work have played a key role in this regard because, on the one hand, her oeuvre has been studied from the traditional perspective of "the genius" whose natural ability and perceived artlessness led her to try to achieve high art recognition. On the other hand, are those studies that place emphasis on Parra's critical and subversive use of artistic elements. In line with the latter position, this research has sought to reveal an unromanticised image of Parra, whose artistic value stems from being deeply critical, activist, politically engaged, etc. For example, there was, in her work, a systematic interdisciplinary reference to art music whose implications denote a deep critical thinking towards self-validation – vindication - understood within the conflictive relation of high versus low cultures. Similarly, her rejection of musical notation has been traditionally seen as a "lack of knowledge" – from high cultural perspectives - while some indicators suggest that she might deliberately have ruled it out as an ideological position. Again, it provides another illustration of the world turned upside-down topos where Parra seems to invert existing conventions. It is important to note that Parra's critical thought seems to come from beyond the communist and socialist political conjuncture of her times, which explains why she never formally joined a political party. Rather, it seems to come from the ancient metaphor that uses the world turned upside-down motif to apply political,

social, religious and moral criticism to everyday situations; again, these are derived from unofficial oral culture. As we have seen in Chapter Five, Parra's oeuvre is highly critical in nature since its deepest root, the *Canto a lo Poeta* practice, presents many critical views of the worldly from the perspective of religious morals and ethics. Parra carried out the task of representing the unurbanized world in modern societies; the modern urbanized eyes of Europe, especially Paris, were not always the target of Parra's critique through art. Most of the focus of Parra's critique was aimed at Chilean society. Parra's 'El Pueblo' magisterially illustrates her ekphrastic manner of creative translation of Neruda's poetics by using a device that is extensively used in the *Canto a lo Poeta* practice. Therefore, this thesis has aimed to show how Parra investigated and learned specific art customs that she later used as a raw material to represent and recreate as original translated poetics. Thus, Parra mastered the way people in rural areas of Chile sang and played, taking the 6/8 rhythm, characteristic of the main forms such as the cueca and the tonade, to then translate them into the anticuecas, film music, a ballet, and songs, but also to poetically translate them into other art forms such as her arpilleras and paintings. Parra translated poetics from sound-text languages to visual ones based on her own interdisciplinary thinking where "the [cueca] dance is a beautiful weave of people".

Many events of significance have occurred since I began this thesis. The centenary of Parra's birth on 4th October was marked in 2017, as were the fifty years since her death on 5th February 1967, which has been commemorated not just in Chile but also around the world. The opening of the Museo Violeta Parra in the Chilean capital on the 4th October 2015, headed by the President Michelle Bachelet, was one of the first measures towards the ways in which the Chilean government has sought to honour Parra. Similarly, many books have been published and republished in the wake of Parra's centenary celebrations. Parra's son, Angel died of cancer on March 11th, 2017. Moreover, Nicanor recently passed away on the 23rd January 2018, at the age of 103. As I have previously mentioned, he was probably the most influential figure in Violeta Parra's life, therefore many questions addressed here were left unanswered because of his hermit-like withdrawal from public life in his final years.⁸⁶ For example, this is quite evident in the fact that Parra's 'suicide letter' remains unpublished and boosts endless speculation over her 'true' reasons for taking her own life. While this thesis has covered a wide range of Parra's oeuvre, there is still more to be explored; therefore, it is likely the interrelationships between Parra's oeuvre will continue to be investigated.

⁸⁶ I tried many times to get in touch with Nicanor but the only response I had was from his legal representative.

Furthermore, the enhanced knowledge I have gained personally from this research has clearly met the reasons why I decided to undertake it; Parra's art has showed me and guided me in understanding the creation and performance of Chilean music.

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- Parra, V. 2014e. *Cantos Campesinos*. [CD / Reissue / 42:04 min. / Barcode: 7804628440353] Santiago de Chile: Chilevisión Música
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Appendix

Appendix 1 (p. v, 109). Violeta Parra playing the guitarron in Altos de Jahuel while researching, 1955.



Appendix 2 (p. 11). Bertel Thorvaldsen, Dance of the Muses on Mount Helicon (1807), marble, Alte Nationalgalerie, Germany.



Appendix 3 (p.13). Claude Boutet's 7-color and 12-color color circles, *Traité de la peinture en miniature* (The Hague, 1708), reproduced in *The Creation of Color in Eighteenth-Century Europe*.



Appendix 4 (p.13). *Laocoön and His Sons*, marble, 208 cm × 163 cm × 112 cm, Vatican Museums, Vatican City (1506).



Appendix 5 (p.14). William Blake, 'Infant Sorrow' from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1789).



Appendix 6 (p. 16). Viktor Hartmann, *The Hut on Fowl's Legs. Clock in the Russian style*, 1870, (Frankenstein, 1939, p. 287)



Appendix 7 (p.17). Alexander Scriabin's 'Tastiera per Luce', designed by Alexander Mozer around 1910, Scriabin State Museum, Russia.



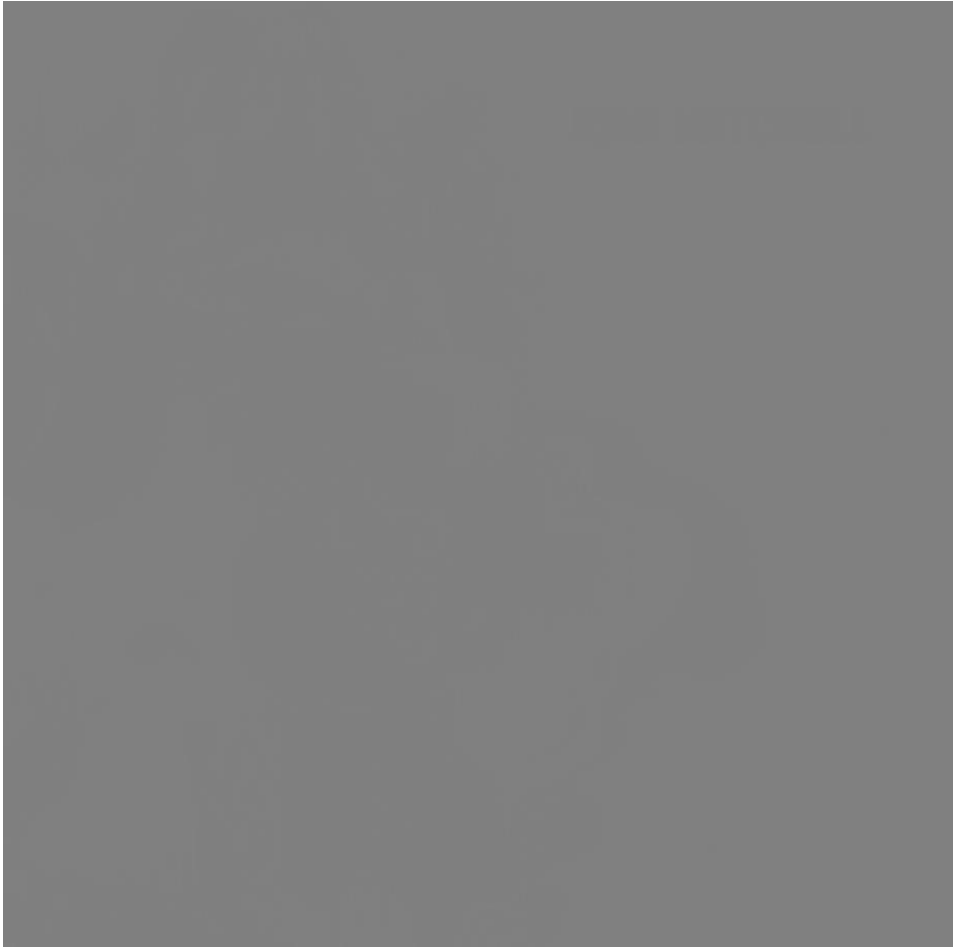
Appendix 8 (p. 17, 77). Mikalojus Čiurlionis, *Fugue* (1908), tempera on paper, 72.6 x 62.2 cm, M. K. Čiurlionis National Art Museum, Lithuania.



Appendix 9 (p. 18). Wassily Kandinsky's translation of music into painting, *Point and line to plane* (1979).



Appendix 10 (p. 18). Xul Solar, *Barreras melódicas* (1948), watercolor, 35 x 50 cm, Museo Xul Solar, Argentina.



Appendix 11 (p. 19). Joni Mitchell's drawing for the cover of her album *Song to a Seagull* (1968).



Appendix 12 (p. 27). Diego Rivera, *Historia de México a través de los siglos* [excerpt] (1929-1935), 276 m², mural, Palacio Nacional de México.



Appendix 13 (p. 43). Henry Matisse (1910), *La Danse*, oil on canvas, 260 cm x 391 cm, The Hermitage, St. Petersburg.



Appendix 14 (p. 67). A Chilean peanut seller in a street.



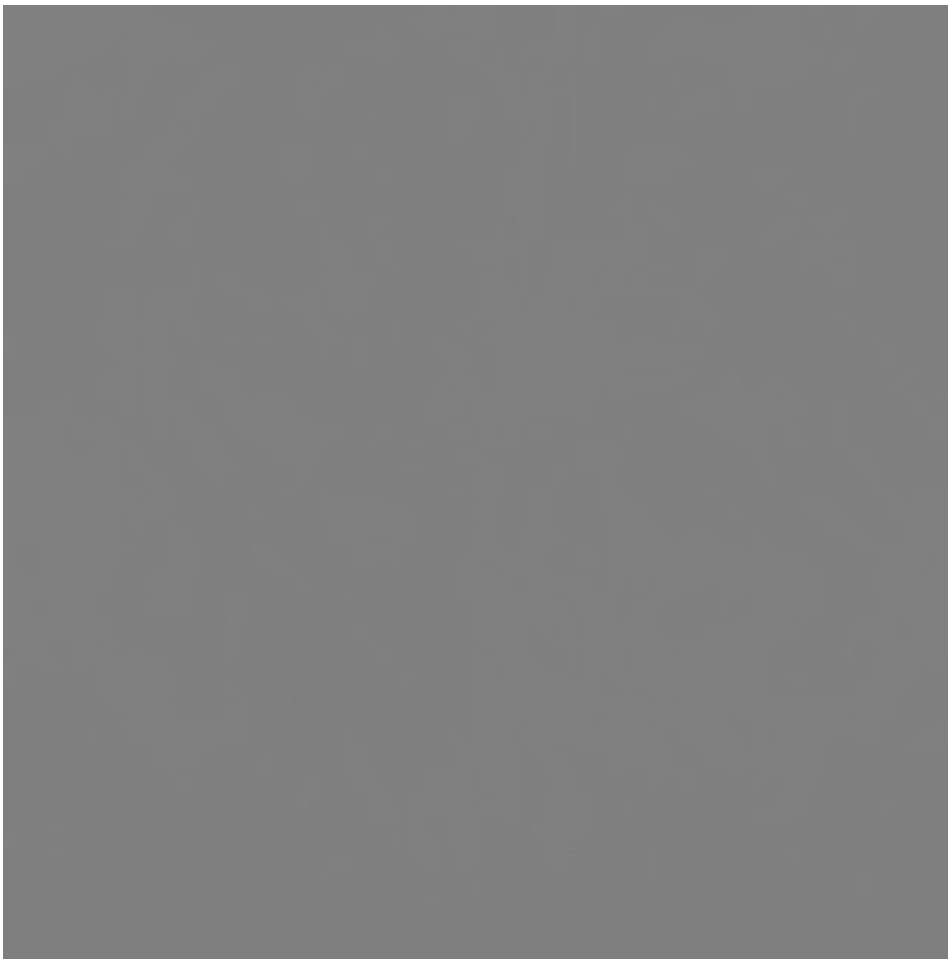
Appendix 15 (p. 73). The 5th World Festival of Youth and Students was held in Warsaw, Poland. The slogan of the festival was: For Peace and Friendship – Against the Aggressive Imperialist Pacts. NATO had just added West Germany into its membership furthering the cold war; the question of decolonization also dominated the festival. Available at: <http://18wfys.tumblr.com/post/53938223384/the-5th-world-festival-of-youth-and-students-was> (Accessed 3th December 2017).



Appendix 16 (p. 73). In 1951, the 3rd World Festival of Youth and Students was held in Berlin. The slogan of the festival was: For Peace and Friendship – Against Nuclear Weapons. This illustration was done by the famous artist Pablo Picasso for the festival. Available at: <http://18wfys.tumblr.com/post/53935557722/in-1951-the-3rd-world-festival-of-youth-and> (Accessed 3th December 2017).



Appendix 17 (p. 75). Paracas candlestick, geoglyph, Paracas peninsula, Ica, Perú (Wikipedia, 2014).



Appendix 18 (p. 77). Wassily Kandinsky, *Fugue* (1914), oil on canvas, 129.5 x 129.5 cm, Beyeler Foundation, Riehen, Switzerland



Appendix 19 (p. 77). Paul Klee, *Fuge in Rot* (1921), 31.5 x 24.4 cm, watercolour, pencil, paper, cardboard, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Switzerland.



Appendix 20 (p. 77). František Kupka, *Amorpha, fugue en deux couleurs* (1912), 210 x 200 cm, oil on canvas, Narodni Galerie, Prague

Defensa de Violeta Parra

Dulce vecina de la verde selva
Huésped eterno del abril florido
Grande enemiga de la zarzamora
Violeta Parra.

Jardinera
locera
costurera
Bailarina del agua transparente
Árbol lleno de pájaros cantores
Violeta Parra.

Has recorrido toda la comarca
Desenterrando cántaros de greda
Y liberando pájaros cautivos
Entre las ramas.

Preocupada siempre de los otros
Cuando no del sobrino
de la tía
Cuándo vas a acordarte de ti misma
Viola piadosa.

Tu dolor es un círculo infinito
Que no comienza ni termina nunca
Pero tú te sobrepones a todo
Viola admirable

Cuando se trata de bailar la cueca
De tu guitarra no se libra nadie
Hasta los muertos salen a bailar
Cueca valseada.

Cueca de la Batalla de Maipú
Cueca del Hundimiento del Angamos
Cueca del Terremoto de Chillán
Todas las cosas.

Ni bandurria
ni tenca
ni zorzal

Ni codorniza libre ni cautiva
Tú

solamente tú
tres veces tú
Ave del
paraíso
terrenal.

Charagüilla
gaviota de agua dulce
Todos los adjetivos se hacen pocos
Todos los sustantivos se hacen pocos

Para nombrarte.

Poesía
pintura
agricultura
Todo lo haces a las mil maravillas
Sin el menor esfuerzo
Como quien se bebe una copa de vino.

Pero los secretarios no te quieren
Y te cierran la puerta de tu casa
Y te declaran la guerra a muerte
Viola doliente.

Porque tú no te vistes de payaso
Porque tú no te compras ni te vendes
Porque hablas la lengua de la tierra
Viola chilensis

¡Porque tú los aclaras en el acto!

Cómo van a quererte
me pregunto
Cuando unos tristes funcionarios
Grisés como las piedras del desierto
¿No te parece?

En cambio tú
Violeta de los Andes
Flor de la cordillera de la costa
Eres un manantial inagotable
De vida humana.

Tu corazón se abre cuando quiere
Tu voluntad se cierra cuando quiere
Y tu salud navega cuando quiere
Aguas arriba

Basta que tú los llames por sus
nombres
Para que los colores y las formas
Se levanten y anden como Lázaro
En cuerpo y alma.

¡Nadie puede quejarse cuando tú
Cantas a media voz o cuando gritas
Como si te estuvieran degollando
Viola volcánica!

Lo que tiene que hacer el auditor
Es guardar un silencio religioso
Porque tu canto sabe adónde va
Perfectamente.

Rayos son los que salen de tu voz

Appendix 21 (p. 100). Nicanor Parra, *Defensa de Violeta Parra* (1969).

Hacia los cuatro puntos cardinales
Vendimiadora ardiente de ojos negros
Violeta Parra.

Se te acusa de esto y de lo otro
Yo te conozco y digo quién eres
¡Oh corderillo disfrazado de lobo!
Violeta Parra.

Yo te conozco bien
hermana vieja
Norte y sur del país atormentado
Valparaíso hundido para arriba
¡Isla de Pascua!

Sacristana cuyaca de Andacollo
Tejedora a palillo y a bolillo
Arregladora vieja de angelitos
Violeta Parra.

Los veteranos del Setentainueve
lloran cuando te oyen sollozar
En el abismo de la noche oscura
¡Lámpara a sangre!

Cocinera
niñera
lavandera
Niña de mano
todos los oficios
Todos los arboles de los crepúsculos
Viola funebris.

Yo no sé qué decir en esta hora
La cabeza me da vueltas y vueltas
Como si hubiera bebido cicuta
Hermana mía.

Dónde voy a encontrar otra Violeta
Aunque recorra campos y ciudades
O me quede sentado en el jardín
Como un inválido

Para verte mejor cierro los ojos
Y retrocedo a los días felices
¿Sabes lo que estoy viendo?
Tu delantal estampado de maqui.

Tu delantal estampado de maqui.
¡Río Cautín!
¡Lautaro!
¡Villa Alegre!
¡Año mil novecientos veintisiete
Violeta Parra!

Pero yo no confío en las palabras
¿Por qué no te levantas de la tumba
A cantar

a bailar
a navegar
En tu guitarra?

Cántame una canción inolvidable
Una canción que no termine nunca
Una canción no más

una canción
Es lo que pido.

Qué te cuesta mujer árbol florido
Álzate en cuerpo y alma del sepulcro
Y haz estallar las piedras con tu voz
Violeta Parra.

Esto es lo que quería decirte
Continúa tejiendo tus alambres
Tus ponchos araucanos
Tus cantaritos de Quinchamali
Continúa puliendo noche y día
Tus tolmiros de madera sagrada
Sin aflicción

sin lágrimas inútiles
O si quieres con lágrimas ardientes
Y recuerda que eres
Un corderillo disfrazado de lobo.

(N. Parra, 1969, pp. 219-223)

[Second part of Appendix 21]



Appendix 22 (p. 106). Juan Bautista Peralta, *Lira Popular Núm. 39* (1866-1930), paper print, Biblioteca Nacional de Chile collection.



Appendix 23 (p. 165). Carlos Isamitt, *Trilla*, no date, 78 x 101 cm, oil on canvas, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago, Chile.



Appendix 24 (p. 174). Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Nederlandse Spreuken* (1559), oil on panel, 163 x 117 cm, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, Germany.



Appendix 25 (p. 175). Antoine Wierix after Willem van Haecht, *The World Upside Down* (1579). Engraving, 207 322 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



Appendix 26 (p. 184). Sergio Bravo, *Banderas del Pueblo's* caption [Film]. 1962. Available at: <http://www.cinerecobrado.cl/banderas-del-pueblo-1964/> (Accessed 10th December 2015)



Appendix 27 (p. 174). Diego Rivera, *Desfile del 1º de mayo en Moscú* (1956), oil on canvas, 135,2 x 108,3 cm, Fomento Cultural Benamex Collection.

List of tracks on Accompanying DVD⁸⁷

All tracks by Violeta Parra come from the original discography listed in the bibliography – including videos. Sources of the tracks in square brackets are listed at the end of this index in a numerical list.

21 Son los Dolores	
track 15	108
5 Preludes [Heitor Villa-Lobos]	
track 47	129
Anticueca 1	
track 34	123
Anticueca 2	
track 35	123
Anticueca 3	
track 49	131
Anticueca 4	
track 50	131
Anticueca 5	
track 51	131
Así te siento tonada [Ricardo Acevedo]	
track 39	128
Canto a lo Divino	
track 30	123
Casamiento de Negros	
track 1	31
Casamiento de negros [1960, Margot Loyola]	
track 59	159
Centésimas and interview from the radio in 1960	
track 14	108
Cinco Piezas para Guitarra [Astor Piazzolla]	
track 48	129
Cueca [Agustín Barrios Mangoré]	
track 46	129
Cueca de Curacautín [Enriqueta Caro]	
track 23	117

⁸⁷ Accompanying DVD, separately in a separate volume which will be subject to an embargo.

Cueca de los Poetas	
track 21	114
Cueca Larga de los Meneses 1958	
track 26	122
Cumpleaños 80 de Nicanor [Roberto Parra]	
track 9	85
De Génesis Prencipiaron	
track 71	179
De las Piernas de un Zancudo	
track 70	179
Defensa de Violeta Parra	
track 13	100
El Chuico y la Damajuana	
track 22	115
El Diablo en el Paraíso	
track 73	181
El Gavilán	
track 53	139
El Joven Sergio 1957	
track 31	123
El Primer Día Del Señor	
track 16	109
El Pueblo	
track 75	186
En el Norte	
track 11	93
Es Aquí o No Es Aquí	
track 18	109
Esquinas [Juan Orrego Salas]	
track 44	128
Gracias a la vida	
track 61	164
Hay una ciudad muy lejos/Versos por ponderación	
track 69	179
Introduction and comments for the Cueca album	
track 2	43
La Carta	

track 55	153
La Cueca Larga	
track 29	122
La Cueca Larga 1960	
track 28	122
La Cueca Larga 2 part 1959	
track 27	122
La Misa del Gallo	
track 4	48
La Víspera de San Juan	
track 67	168
Los Mandamientos	
track 17	109
Madeleine Brumagne from <i>Viola Chilensis</i> [Luis Vera]	
track 6	56
Mata de Arrayán Florido [Ester Soré]	
track 63	167
Melodía loca	
track 58	158
Mimbre [Sergio Bravo]	
track 52	136
Miren cómo Sonríen	
track 57	156
Parabienes al Revés	
track 72	181
Parabienes de Novios	
track 8	76
Parra exemplifying popular songs	
track 62	166
Parra radio interview 1960	
track 68	171
Parra's Louvre exhibition	
track 7	76
Piojo Salinas and Alfonso Rubio example of a duel of payadores	
track 12	108
Preludio 1 [Darwin Vargas]	
track 42	128

Preludio en tres cuerdas [Carlos Pimentel]	
track 38	127
Qué dirá el Santo Padre	
track 64	168
Qué vamos a hacer	
track 66	168
Santiago Penando Estas	
track 56	153
Santo Padre for solo guitar	
track 65	168
Siete Preludios Breves [Miguel Letelier]	
track 45	128
Sirilla en Rondo [Victor Biskupovic]	
track 41	128
Sugerencias de Chile Op.1 [Jorge Urrutia Blondel]	
track 43	128
Swiss Documentary Violeta Parra	
track 5	56
Tengo que Hacer un Retrato	
track 3	43
The Individual's Soliloquy [Nicanor Parra]	
track 10	89
Tocata y Fuga	
track 60	164
Tonada sin retorno [Eulogio Dávalos]	
track 40	128
Travesuras 1957	
track 32	123
Tres Cuecas Punteadas	
track 24	117
Tres Palabras 1957	
track 33	123
Tres Polkas Antiguas	
track 25	117
Un Domingo en el Cielo	
track 74	182
Verso por las Doce Palabras	

track 19	109
Verso por Padecimiento	
track 36	124
Yo Canto la Diferencia	
track 54	151
Zamacueca 3 [Federico Guzmán]	
track 20	113
Zamacueca nro.1 de José White [Sergio Sauvalle]	
track 37	127

List of sources from the accompanying DVD

Track 9. Inti Illimani. (1996) *Arriesgaré la piel*. CD. Santiago de Chile: Emi Odeón.

Track 10. Parra N. (1965) *Poemas y Antipoemas*. Long Play [33 1/2 rpm]. Santiago de Chile, Odeón.

Track 12. Video from Youtube [Online]. Accessed on April 2017 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXu04y39aQc>

Track 20. Video from the CD *Isidora Zegers y su Tiempo* by Elvira Savi, 2003 [Online]. Accessed on December 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ay7MHdMRgug>

Track 23. Video from Heriberto U. Muñoz Acuña's *Música de Tradición Oral de Curacautín*, 2006 [Online]. Accessed on July 2017 from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROk_gnESS7Y

Track 37. Sauvalle, S. (1998) *La Cueca Bien Temperada*. Santiago de Chile: Fondart.

Track 38. Audio [Online] from the web page <http://www.certamenpimentel.cl/audios.html>. Accessed on February 2017.

Track 39. Acevedo R. (1964) *Así te Siento Tonada – Solos de Guitarra*. LP 33 1/3 RPM. Santiago de Chile: Odeon.

Track 40. Dávalos E. (1997) *Concierto Latinoamericano*. CD. Barcelona: Alerce.

Track 41. Ruiz-Tagle P. (2004) *Música para Guitarra de Víctor Biskupovic*. CD. Valdivia: Instituto de acústica de la Universidad Austral de Chile.

Track 42. Audio from guitar player Octavio Bustos video in Youtube [Online]. Accessed on February 2017 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cGZ8kZApKw&t=28s>

Track 43. Orlandini L. (1999) *Música de Concierto Chilena: Obras para Guitarra*. CD. Santiago de Chile: SVR.

Track 44. Audio from a Luis Orlandini's live performance at the '8th Latin-American Music Festival Texas Christian University', Texas, October 3, 2011 [Online]. Accessed on February 2017 from: <https://youtu.be/simucUTZmN0?t=12m17s>

Track 45. Audio from a Luis Orlandini's live performance at the "Homenaje a Miguel Letelier 2017" in the Isidora Zegers concert hall, University of Chile [Online]. Accessed on January 2017 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GM90gD0jPZQ&t=2865s>

Track 46. Williams J. (1995) *From The Jungles of Paraguay*. CD. England: Sony Music.

Track 47. Romero, P. (1990) *Heitor Villa-Lobos: 5 Preludes / Etude No.1 / Suite populaire bresilienne*. CD. United States of America: Polygram Records.

Track 48. Gaido, H. (1999) *Piazzolla, A.: Flute and Guitar Music*. CD. Germany: Naxos.

Track 52. Video from Youtube [Online]. Accessed on March 2016 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLq78pOvtJo>

Track 59. Facultad de Ciencias y Artes Musicales. (1960) *Folklore Musical Chileno*. LP 33 1/3 RPM. Face B. Instituto de Investigaciones Musicales Universidad de Chile. Santiago de Chile: RCA Victor.

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